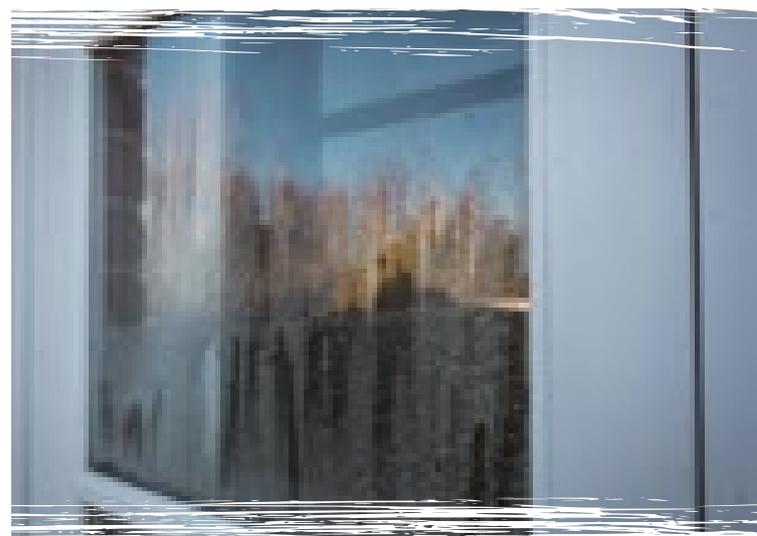


CONDENSATION & MOULD ADVICE

When the weather becomes colder, condensation and mould can form more easily. We always receive a significant number of reports of mould from October to March and over the warmer months there are hardly any issues.



Are you experiencing condensation on windows, walls or ceilings?

Are window surrounds or ceilings going mouldy like shown in the images above?

Please read through the following information on the causes, effects and the ways to avoid condensation and mould forming.

SUMMARY

WHAT IS CONDENSATION?



There is always some amount of moisture in the air and if it gets colder the air is unable to hold the moisture. This moisture is produced by normal daily activities, some of which will show itself as small water droplets which is most noticeable on windows on a cold morning. This is condensation and can also be seen on mirrors when having a bath or shower. It will also show on cold surfaces such as tiles, cold walls and ceilings.

If damage has been caused to a property because tenants have not properly managed condensation then repairs can be charged to the tenants. However, by following this advice given on this data sheet you should avoid any damage and the consequent charges for repair.

Problems that can be caused by excessive condensation.

Dampness caused by excessive condensation can lead to mould growth on window frames and sills, walls, ceilings, furniture and clothing.

In addition to this, damp humid conditions provide an environment where dust mites can easily grow and can affect asthma sufferers.



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First steps against condensation

Open your curtains and wipe dry your windows and window sills EVERY morning as well as surfaces in the kitchen or bathroom that might have become wet. Wring out the cloth in the sink rather than drying on a radiator otherwise the water vapour is going straight back into the air within the property.

First steps against mould growth.

First of all, treat any mould in the property then deal with the basic problem of limiting the amount of condensation being created so as to stop the mould reappearing.

To kill and remove mould, wipe down or spray walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash or diluted bleach.

Make sure you follow the instructions for its safe use.

The main factors that cause condensation are:

- **Too much moisture being produced**
- **Not enough ventilation**
- **Cold surfaces**
- **Temperature**

You need to look at all these factors to cure a condensation problem.



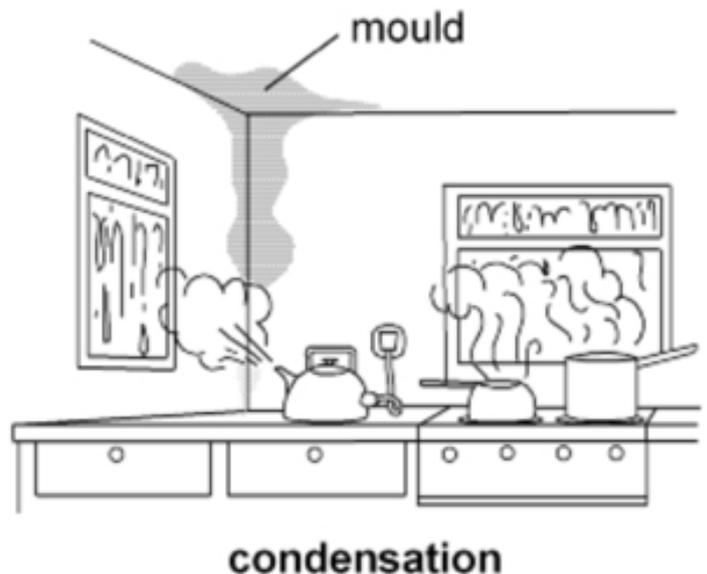
Too much moisture being produced

Our everyday activities add extra moisture to the air in our homes. Even our breathing adds moisture. One person asleep adds a half pint of water to the air during the night. To give you an idea of the moisture that can be added to the air during the day, here are a few examples.

- a) 2 people at home (just breathing) = 3 pints
- b) A bath or shower = 2 pints
- c) Drying clothes indoors = 6 pints
- d) Cooking and using a kettle = 3 pints
- e) Washing dishes = 1 pint

This all adds up to a total of 15 pints in one day and highlights the importance of trying to reduce condensation in your home.

- 1) Always cook with the pan lids on, and turn the heat down once the water has boiled. Only use the minimum amount of water to cook vegetables.
- 2) Hang your washing outside to dry whenever possible or hang it in the bathroom with the door closed and window slightly open or extractor fan on. Don't be tempted to put it on radiators or in front of a heater/fire.
- 3) Use a tumble dryer if there is one. If you choose to dry clothes on radiators the extra cost of heating and resultant damp air in the property will far outweigh the cost of using a tumble dryer.
- 4) When filling a bath, run the cold water first then the hot, this will reduce the amount of steam by around 90%.
- 5) Never turn bath/shower room extractor fans off by the isolator switch. They are usually on timers or movement sensors and are there for a reason. By turning them off you are likely to cause damage to the property and therefore incur charges for repair.



VENTILATING YOUR HOME

Ventilation will dramatically reduce condensation by removing moist air from your home and replacing it with drier air from the outside.

Reduce the build up of condensation by 'cross ventilating' your home. E.g. slightly opening a small window downstairs and the same upstairs. Ideally these should be on opposite sides of the house. At the same time open the internal doors as this will then allow the drier air to circulate throughout. The air needs to be able to flow through the property as in the image shown.

Cross ventilation should be carried out for around 30 minutes each day.

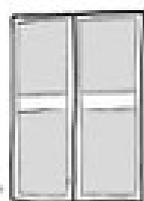
NB: Be sure that accessible windows will not cause a security problem and remember to close them when you go out.



AT LEAST TWO OPENINGS

Examples:

- Windows
- Sliding Glass Doors
- Ventilation Louvres
- Operable Skylights



IN SUMMARY

- a) Ventilate your kitchen area when cooking or washing up. A window slightly open will make a huge difference to condensation. If you have one, use your cooker extractor fan if it is vented to the outside.
- b) Ventilate your kitchen or bathroom for around 20 minutes after use by opening a small window. Use an extractor where possible.
- c) Open curtains during the day to allow airflow to the windows and frames. They will go black with mould if you do not do this and will cost money to redecorate or reseal.
- d) Ventilate your bedroom by leaving a window slightly open at night or use trickle vents if fitted.
- e) Keep kitchen and bathroom door closed to prevent moisture escaping into the rest of the property.
- f) To reduce mildew on clothes and other stored items, do not overfill wardrobes and cupboards as this will restrict airflow.
- g) Keep a gap between large pieces of furniture and the walls.

Warm air will hold more moisture than cooler air and this is what will deposit droplets of water around your home. Air is like a sponge. The warmer it is-the more moisture it will hold. Heating one room to a high level and leaving other rooms cold will make condensation worse in the unheated rooms, therefore it is better to have a medium level of temperature throughout the house.

Keeping heating on a low level all day in cold weather will help control condensation. If you don't heat every room, keep the doors of unheated rooms open to allow some heat to circulate.

REMEMBER:

The only lasting cure for mould is to reduce the amount of condensation you are creating by using heating more and ventilating the property effectively.