

A GUIDE TO DEALING WITH CONDENSATION AND MOULD

What is condensation and how do you prevent it?

Condensation is arguably the most common form of dampness and can eventually lead to the growth of black mould. It forms on internal surfaces when the temperature drops sufficiently below the temperature of moist air inside the property. You should watch out for it because if left to develop, condensation can lead to an unsightly, musty property. More importantly, it can also aggravate or trigger health problems such as asthma and wider complaints.

How do you spot it?

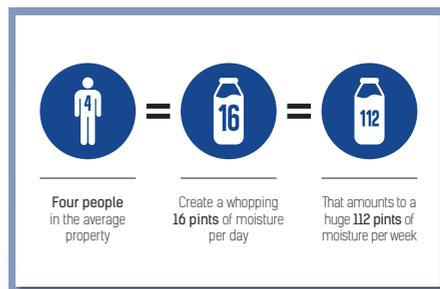
- ▮ Streaming windows and walls
- ▮ Damp areas can appear on walls, especially behind furniture and in corners
- ▮ Wallpaper can start to peel
- ▮ Blackened window frames
- ▮ Mould growth, usually black mould, starts to appear
- ▮ Soft furnishings and fabrics become prone to mould and mildew

Tips on how to reduce it...

- ▮ Try to keep the inside temperature reasonably constant for as much of the time as possible
- ▮ Avoid drying clothes indoors. If you have no choice, place the clothes rack beside an open window in a room with the door shut

- ▮ Do not dry clothes over any radiators
- ▮ Ensure any tumble drier is properly vented or the condensate regularly emptied
- ▮ Do not supplement your heating with paraffin/Calor gas type heating
- ▮ Keep furniture away from walls
- ▮ Do not disable any extraction units
- ▮ Wipe down moisture settled on surfaces
- ▮ Keep lids on pans
- ▮ Cover fish tanks
- ▮ Keep trickle vents open and use any existing extraction

Statistics



- ▮ 1 in 5 properties suffer from condensation
- ▮ 50% of the world's illnesses are caused or aggravated by poor indoor air

Statistics Continued...

RH humidity is linked to temperature



Temperature RISES 1°C → RH FALLS approx 5%



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Average UK internal temperature 17.7°C

Insulating a property seals natural leakage points & keeps moisture in.

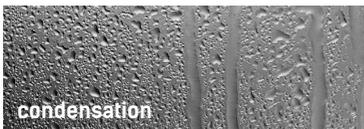
RH needs to exceed 70% for 6 Hours for mould growth

Dust mites need RH above 60% to survive

What causes the damp?

CONDENSATION

Day to day activities such as cooking, washing, bathing, ironing and even breathing all add to the problem. In a property of 4 people each will contribute approximately 4 pints of moisture per day, adding up to well over 100 pints per week! In the past there would be a natural escape for this hot, damp and poor quality air through window frames, doors, uncarpeted floorboards and so forth. However, building features designed to cut down heat loss such as cavity wall insulation, double-glazing and draught proofing, inhibit 'natural ventilation'. Instead, stale, humid air is trapped, commonly causing streaming windows (condensation), which will inevitably lead to musty smells, dampness and ultimately mould growth.



What causes the damp?

RISING DAMP

Rising damp will leave a "tide-mark" of saltation no higher than a metre.

Wallpaper may peel

Skirting boards can rot

Localised dark or brown damp "stains" are visible

Check to see for obvious leaks from pipe work or structural elements



Does the fan work?

Just because a fan turns on and makes a noise, it doesn't mean it's working – you can't see air! If the fan is "axial" (the fan blades face forward) then fan will be considerably less effective in the case of the following:



The ducting is over 1 metre in length

The duct run as bends

Flexible ducting is used

The fan is not ducted at all (always check ceiling installs)

The "air movement" is noisy – this indicates high resistance

Does the fan work? Continued...

- There is dirt and dust on the impellor (fan blades)
- Is the external grill made for ventilation (not an airbrick)

The best thing to do if you are unsure is to measure the airflow of the fan. This can be achieved using specialised anemometers however they can be expensive. If the tenant or landlord is unsure we can provide this service free of charge.



Cleaning Mould

Without ventilation, mould is likely to return after it is cleaned off. It is harmful for your health and therefore worth controlling. Please note EnviroVent specialise in ventilation and we are not experts in mould removal. **For this please see below official government guidance from the NHS.**

You may be able to remove mould yourself, or you may need to get a professional to remove it.

Only remove mould yourself if it's caused by condensation and covers an area less than one metre squared (1x1 metre or 3x3 feet). Don't try to remove the mould yourself if it's caused by sewage or other contaminated water.

Protect yourself from mould spores by wearing goggles, long rubber gloves and a mask that covers your nose and mouth. Open the windows but keep doors closed to prevent spores spreading to other areas of the house.



- Have a plastic bag ready to take away any soft furnishings, clothes and soft toys that are mouldy. Soft furnishings should be shampooed and clothes professionally dry cleaned.
- Fill a bucket with water and some mild detergent, such as washing up liquid or a soap used for hand-washing clothes.
- Use a rag dipped in the soapy water to carefully wipe the mould off the wall. Be careful not to brush it, as this can release mould spores (In the case where the condensation problem is not solved, **EnviroVent can supply Mould Guard Plus which will delay new growth of mould.** It won't stop it coming back altogether).
- When you've finished, use a dry rag to remove the moisture from the wall.
- Afterwards, put the rags in a plastic bag and throw them away.
- All the surfaces in the room should be thoroughly cleaned by either wet wiping or vacuuming to remove any spores.



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