

CONDENSATION

This is by far the most common cause of dampness experienced by tenants and householders, resulting in a large number of enquiries or complaints received by the Council.

Condensation is caused by water vapour or moisture from inside the dwelling coming into contact with a colder surface, such as a window or wall. The resultant water drops (condensation) may then soak into the wallpaper or paintwork or even plasterwork. In time, the affected damp areas then attract black mould that grows on its surface.

Condensation mainly occurs during the colder months, whether it is rainy or dry outside. It is usually found in the corners of rooms, north facing walls and on or near windows. It is also found in areas of little air circulation such as behind wardrobes and beds, especially when they are pushed up against external walls.



Note: Black mould is frequently seen as a result of condensation.

Condensation - what can you do about it?

Taking Action - The five main ways to deal with condensation are:



1

Treat any mould you may already have in your home.



2

Produce less water vapour or steam in your home.



3

Don't let the water vapour and steam that is produced spread all around the house.



4

Keep your home ventilated.



5

Keep your home warm.

To deal with a condensation problem effectively, you will probably need to do all five, though the first three are the most important and can be done at minimum cost.

1 Treat

Treat any mould you may already have in your home



1. To kill and remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicide wash – make sure you following the manufacturer's instructions precisely.
2. You will need to wash or dry clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets.
3. After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring.

2 Produce less water vapour

The amount of condensation depends on how much water vapour is in the air. Many everyday activities add to the water vapour level in your home, but the effect can be kept to a minimum.



Cooking:

1. Cover pans when you are cooking.
2. Don't leave kettles and pans boiling longer than necessary.

Drying Clothes:



1. Hang washing outside to dry whenever you can.
2. If you have to use a tumble dryer make sure it's vented to the outside.
3. If you have to dry washing indoors use the bathroom and keep the door shut and the room well ventilated.
4. Do not hang wet/damp washing on radiators around your home - doing so is very likely to cause condensation problems.



Bathing and showering:

1. Keep the bathroom door shut and the room well ventilated during and afterwards to prevent water vapour spreading around your home.

3 Don't let it spread

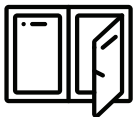
Confine wet air to just a few rooms.



1. Your bathroom and kitchen are “wet rooms” - keep these doors shut so the wet air can't spread to the rest of your home.
2. At the same time make sure your bathroom and kitchen are well ventilated so the water vapour can escape outside.
3. This is even more important if some of the other rooms are very cold. If rooms are not being used and are unheated it's a good idea to keep the doors shut.
4. Don't completely draft proof kitchens, bathrooms and other rooms where condensation is already a problem - you could make it far worse.

4 Keep your home ventilated

Let wet air out.



1. The best way to remove water vapour is by providing adequate ventilation. Nobody likes drafts but some ventilation is vital.
2. Keep a small window ajar, or a trickle ventilator open in each occupied room to give back ground ventilation, (but make sure your home is still secure).
3. Open the windows to let the water vapour out, especially when you're doing the washing or cooking.
4. Windows near the ceiling are more effective at letting water vapour out than ones at a lower level.

5 Keep your home warm



Try to keep your home warm, at a consistent temperature

Remove excess moisture



Always wipe the windows and window sills of your home every morning to remove condensation. This is especially important in the bedroom, bathroom and kitchen - just opening the window is not enough.

The list below gives you some idea of how much extra water you could be adding to the air in your home in a day:-

How much water?



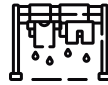
1

2 people at home
for 16 hours
3 pints



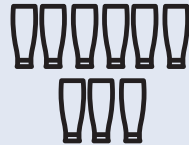
2

A bath or shower
2 pints



3

Drying clothes
indoors
9 pints



4

Cooking and
use of a kettle
6 pints



5

Washing dishes
2 pints



6

Bottled gas heater
(8 hours use)
4 pints

