

CONDENSATION - Causes and Advice



What Is Condensation?

The air in our homes always has some moisture in it, even if we cannot see it. The warmer the air, the more moisture it can hold.

When warm, moist air comes up against a cold surface, the air cools down and can't hold as much moisture. Tiny drops of water - condensation - appear on the cold surface.

Where Do We Get Condensation?

We tend to see condensation forming on outside walls, in the corners of rooms, and in places where there is not much movement of air - such as behind

cupboards. It usually becomes a problem during the winter months.

Why Is It A Problem?

Mould can grow on surfaces that are damp.

What Causes Moisture in the Air?

Just by living in our homes we put moisture into the air, but some things we do will cause more moisture, such as:

- ❖ bathing or showering
- ❖ hand-washing clothes
- ❖ cooking with pans
- ❖ washing-up
- ❖ mopping floors
- ❖ drying clothes on racks and radiators.

How Can I Get Rid of Mould?

Mould can be removed using a fungicidal wash, which you can get from DIY stores or supermarkets. If decorating are badly affected you will have to re-decorate and use fungicidal wash on the area before redecorating. Using fungicidal paints, or vinyl paper and fungicidal wallpaper adhesive, may help prevent future problems.

How Can I Avoid Mould or Stop It Coming Back?

You need to keep the moisture in the air under control. Avoiding condensation will help you avoid mould growing or coming back.

How to Avoid Condensation

Don't Get Steamed Up

- ❖ cover pans and do not leave kettles boiling.
- ❖ don't use paraffin or portable bottled-gas heaters as they put a lot of moisture into the air. These heaters are not allowed under your tenancy agreement.

- ❖ dry washing outdoors, or put it in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or the fan on.
- ❖ if you have to dry washing indoors, close the door and open a window. It is a good idea to dry clothes in a room where you have an extractor fan. Do not dry washing on radiators.
- ❖ run the vent from your tumble dryer to the outside, unless it is the self-condensing type. You can buy DIY kits to take the air outside if your tumble dryer is not self-condensing.
- ❖ if you have guests, take extra care to let fresh air in. The more people there are, the more moisture they produce.
- ❖ having a lot of indoor plants can add to the problem as they produce moisture.

Let In Plenty Of Fresh Air

You can let fresh air into your home without making a draught:

- ❖ keep a small window open if someone is in the room and make sure a 'trickle' ventilator is open at all times, particularly if you have double-glazing.
- ❖ do not seal or cover air bricks in walls.
- ❖ when using the kitchen or bathroom, open the windows wider.
- ❖ close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use and open the windows, even if they have an

extractor fan. This will help stop moisture reaching other rooms.

- ❖ if you have an extractor fan make sure you clean it regularly. These fans have a low running cost: usually only that of using a 60 watt light, and you do not have to leave them running for a long time.
- ❖ let air into your cupboards and wardrobes. Avoid putting too many things in there as this stops the air circulating.

Practical Measures You Can Take to Reduce the Risk of Condensation

- ❖ in cold weather it is a good idea to keep low background heating on during the day if you can.
- ❖ do not put furniture directly in front of radiators as this stops warm air circulating.
- ❖ try to keep furniture against internal walls.

If it has to be put against external walls, make sure there is gap between the back of the furniture and the wall to allow air to move.

If you follow this advice you will keep condensation problems to a minimum.

Our Contact:

For more advice or to discuss a particular condensation problem please contact us. If you would also like this leaflet in another language or format please contact us:

Phone : 020 8964 2323

Website : www.westwayha.org.uk

Email : enquiries@westwayha.org.uk