Energy Advice Factsheet

Condensation in the Home - Page 1 of 2

Frequent build-up of condensation can cause damage to your home, so here are some tips on how to identify, prevent and treat it before it gets out of hand.

What is condensation?

Condensation occurs where moist air comes into contact with a surface which is at a lower temperature; such as a window, ceramic tiling or an external wall. The moisture within the air then condenses into water onto this colder surface.

Condensation is the most common form of dampness in buildings, and is more of a problem in modern properties than in older buildings. Newer Buildings the lack natural ventilation from open fire-places and gaps around doors and windows that older building have. They rely on the proper use of extract fans, window trickle vents and windows being opened periodically to provide adequate ventilation.

Effects of condensation:

- Water running down cold surfaces, i.e. windows, bathroom fittings, tiles, paintwork etc.
- Black spots appear on walls, ceilings, skirting boards, along window sills and tile grout (black mould does not grow on rising or penetrating damp).
- Mould growth on clothing and furnishings

Where does the moisture come from?

We nearly always find that Tenants are creating the excessive moisture by;

- drying clothes on radiators
- not using the extract fans provided in kitchens and bathrooms
- keeping window vents closed
- using tumble dryers incorrectly
- Sometimes we find the Tenants are using a portable gas heater (which we don't allow in our properties).

Why does the condensation only appear in certain areas of my home?

You may notice that the condensation tends to appear in the same areas, this can be in a different room from where the excess moisture is produced.

Usually these areas have poor air circulation, in corners, behind wardrobes etc. Try not to over-fill wardrobes to encourage circulation, and it may help if large furniture is not directly against the wall, particularly if this is an external wall. In some modern properties missing or disturbed insulation above the ceilings can cause cold bridging which may encourage condensation and subsequent mould growth.

Energy Advice Factsheet

Condensation in the Home - Page 2 of 2

What you can do to decrease the amount of moisture indoors?

- Hang washing outside to dry.
- Make sure your tumble drier is vented outside.
- If you have to dry clothes inside due to poor weather, use a clothes horse/airer make sure you leave the windows of the room open to allow for ventilation, and close the door to prevent moisture travelling throughout the house.
- Always cook with pan lids on, and the heat turned up no higher than necessary.
- Use extract fans and keep the door closed, when cooking or bathing.
- Ventilate your home - ensure all trickle vents on windows remain open, and open windows when practical.

How can I remove mould caused by condensation?

Mould can be easily removed from hard surfaces - You can normally wipe it off with a disposable cloth using a fungicidal cleaner (follow manufacturers instructions).

Avoid simply using a wet cloth as this will be ineffective and may encourage further mould.

What about fitting extra insulation?

This alone will not remove the problem, it will just move the problem to another area of your home. The two best things that can be done to sort the problem are:

- **Ventilate your home**
- **Reduce the amount of moisture entering the air in your property.**

What to do next?

Following the above tips may be enough to prevent any future problems, however if you continue to experience condensation and problems with mould it may be necessary to have an inspection carried out on your property by one of our Asset Management Officers. Just contact our office and we will arrange an appointment for a staff member to visit your home.

Please let us know if you find this factsheet helpful, or if you would like any further information.