

# Damp, Mould & Condensation

**We take any reports of damp, mould and condensation very seriously and want to work together with residents to resolve any issues as quickly as possible. If you are experiencing condensation or mould on windows, walls, or ceilings please contact us as soon as possible so we can inspect the affected areas. During our visit we will try to identify the cause of the problem and agree the next steps with you to address the situation. If work is required, such as the fitting of vents or fans, we will carry out this work without delay. If we establish that there is damp or mould in your home, we will carry out a further follow-up visits to monitor whether the situation has been addressed successfully.**

Condensation and mould growth affect millions of residents and homeowners and can occur in both new and old homes. However, when it occurs it can have a real impact on health and wellbeing and so it is important we work together to address it as quickly as possible. There are a number of causes and contributory factors that can make condensation and mould growth hard to manage so it is important to understand the causes and ways of reducing condensation in your home so we can work together to address the issue.

## What is condensation?

The air inside your home contains a certain amount of water which is increased by the things you do on a daily basis. Through the daily routine of showers, baths, boiling kettles, cooking and so on, a family of four will, on average, create approximately four pints of water vapour per person per day. That's over 100 pints per week for a household. This moisture has to end up somewhere!

Condensation is formed when excess warm moisture in the air (steam or water vapour) meets a surface cooler than itself such as walls, woodwork and windows. When this happens the vapour becomes water. Whilst this can run off surfaces such as glass or painted surfaces, it is likely to soak in to porous surfaces such as walls and ceilings.

There are three main causes of condensation:

- Too much moisture
- Too little ventilation
- Cool temperatures.



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Do not confuse condensation with rising damp. Rising damp carries salt from the ground, which kills mould by extracting moisture from it. Therefore if you have mould in your home, this is not caused by rising damp.

## What are the effects of condensation?

If the water soaks into walls, ceilings or untreated woodwork, it will cause mould to grow. Mould is not only unsightly but the spores it releases can also have ill effects on your health. It is important to wipe down any first signs of mould as soon as possible.

## How to reduce condensation

Simple things can help reduce condensation in your home. Reducing moisture and ensuring there is adequate heating and ventilation are key factors. This is important not only in bathrooms and kitchens where steam produced by washing and cooking poses a high level of threat, but also in other rooms where poor airflow in corners and behind furniture may cause condensation to form.

### Reduce moisture

- Always use extractor fans if you have them. If not, open your windows a little whenever possible.
- When cooking, ensure that the kitchen door is shut, window open and extractor fan on. These actions should be taken during cooking and for 20 to 30 minutes afterwards
- Hang washing outside to dry. If it has to be hung inside, hang it in the bathroom, close the door and open a window slightly or put the extractor fan on.
- Don't put washing on radiators.
- Cook with pan lids on and don't overfill the saucepan.



### Increase ventilation

Some ventilation is needed to let the air circulate. Take care however not to over-ventilate in cold weather: as well as making your home colder, it can make condensation more likely. Ventilating for at least 30 minutes a day will replace moist air with dry air from the outside; opening a small window at either end of your property or one upstairs and one downstairs will do this. You should also:

- Decrease clutter.
- Do not push furniture up against walls.

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## Keep it warm

Cold walls and surfaces encourage condensation to form so keeping the home warm will help to control it. It can help to keep some heating on all day in cold weather, even at a low level.

Heating one room to a high level and leaving other rooms cold makes condensation worse in the unheated rooms. If you don't have heating in every room, keep doors of unheated rooms open to allow some warm air in.

## Managing condensation

Open the curtains and wipe dry your windows and window sills every morning, as well as surfaces in the kitchen or bathroom that have become wet. Wring out the cloth in a sink rather than drying it on a radiator, or the water vapour will go straight back into the air.



## Treating mould

Where condensation problems have been neglected and mould has begun to form:

- Treat any mould already there by wiping down and spraying walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash. Follow the instructions for using it safely.
- Don't try to remove mould with a brush or vacuum cleaner, as this will make spores airborne and spread them further.

## Our Approach

**If you have any signs of damp or mould please contact us immediately.**

### We will:

- Inspect all homes for which we have received a report of damp/mould
- Issue all residents who report damp/mould with a Mould-Less<sup>®</sup> meter and a Damp, Mould and Condensation leaflet
- Ensure we address this as a shared problem
- Discuss energy efficiency with all residents reporting damp/mould
- Consider ventilation and insulation as a matter of course
- Use a 3-part anti-mould paint process in extreme cases
- Look at insulation and ventilation on inspection
- Use demand controlled ventilation systems in properties severely affected by damp or mould
- Consider the running cost to residents of running any ventilation systems
- Follow up all damp, mould and condensation reports every 3 months – these will be recorded on a DMC Register.

**Contact us:** T: 020 8659 3055 E: [repairs@pcha.co.uk](mailto:repairs@pcha.co.uk)