

Hastoe  
Group

# Condensation and Mould



## All of us generate moisture vapour in our homes through our normal daily activities such as cooking and bathing. Condensation of water vapour occurs on colder surfaces.

Mould spores are formed on surfaces where the vapour has condensed into water. The information in this leaflet will help you keep your home free from mould. Please remember that it is the responsibility of every resident to ensure that they employ the correct combination of heating, ventilation and treatment to keep their homes free from the effects of condensation.

### What is condensation?

There is always some moisture in the air, even if you can't see it. If the air gets colder it can't hold all the moisture and tiny drops of water appear. This is condensation. You may notice it when you see your breath on a cold day, or when the mirror mists over when you have a bath.

Condensation occurs mainly during cold weather, usually from October to April, whether it is raining or dry. It does not leave a 'tidemark' and appears in places where there is little movement of air. Look for black mould in corners of rooms, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It will often form on north-facing walls which don't get direct heat from the sun.



## Is condensation causing the mould and damp?

Condensation is not the only cause of damp. It can also come from:

- Leaking pipes, wastes or overflows.
- Rain seeping through the roof where a tile or slate is missing, spilling from a blocked gutter, penetrating around window frames, or leaking through a cracked pipe.
- Rising damp due to a defective damp-course or because there is no damp-course.
- Defective brickwork.

These causes of penetrating damp often leave a 'tidemark' and you should call our repairs line (see back page for the number) and have the necessary repairs carried out to remove the source of damp.

If your home is newly built it may be damp because the water used during its construction is still drying out. If your home is damp for any of these reasons it may take some weeks of ventilation to dry out. Hiring a dehumidifier will help. If you do not think the damp comes from any of these

causes, it is probably condensation.

## What can I do about it?

Firstly, treat the mould already in your home. If you deal with the basic problems of condensation, the mould should not reappear.

To treat and remove the mould,



wipe down the walls, ceiling and windows and door frames with a fungicidal

wash in accordance with the manufacturers instructions.

Do not use bleach as this is water base and does not actually remove the mould.

Do not try to remove the mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning as this can increase the risk of respiratory problems.

Occupants of buildings with damp or mould are at increased risk of experiencing health problems such as respiratory symptoms, respiratory infections, allergic rhinitis and asthma.

The only way of avoiding severe mould is by eliminating the dampness.

The way you use your home affects the amount of condensation you get. Please bear in mind the following tips:



### Doors

Keep internal kitchen and bathroom doors shut, particularly

when cooking, washing or bathing - otherwise water vapour will spread right through the house and condensation will probably reach external walls and ceilings in the other cooler rooms particularly bedrooms.

### Ventilation and windows

- The more moisture produced in your home, the greater are



the chances of condensation and mould, unless there is adequate ventilation.

Nobody likes draughts, but some ventilation is essential.

- In winter, open the windows a little when they mist up.

- If you fit draught stripping, leave a space for a small amount of air to get through.
- If you have an extractor fan, use it when cooking or having a bath/shower to stop the windows getting steamed up.

### Kettles and pans

Don't allow kettles and pans to



boil away any longer than is necessary, and always put the lid on the saucepan.

### Heating and Insulation

- You will get less condensation if you keep your home warm most of the time. It is preferable to keep a steady low level of heating throughout the day rather than heating your home from cold each time.
- Use the thermostats and/or thermostatic radiator valves (if fitted) to control your heating – this should also help to reduce your heating bills.

### Drying Clothes

- Drying clothes indoors, particularly on radiators, will increase condensation unless you open a window to allow air to circulate.

- If you have no other choice but to dry your washing at home then it would be better to do so by placing the washing on a clothes maiden



located in the kitchen or bathroom, shut the door, turn on the radiator and run the extractor fan (if there is one provided) or open the window a little.

- If you have a tumble dryer which is not vented to the outside you must install a vent directly to the outside.

### Beds cupboards and Wardrobes

- Don't overfill cupboards and wardrobes. Always make sure that some air can circulate freely by fitting ventilators in doors and leaving a space at the back of the shelves.

- Keep beds, mattresses, blankets, quilts and pillows away from external walls so that the air can circulate freely.

### Chimneys

Never block chimneys as it could be dangerous. If you are covering up a fireplace you must at least fit an air vent to allow ventilation.

### Baths

Always remember to put a small amount of cold water in the bath before you turn on the hot tap.



### Showers

Do not run your shower for longer than needed.

### Condensation

Always remember to mop up any condensation or water as it forms or daily.

# How to contact us

## Write

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## Alternative formats of this document

If you require this information in another language, large print or different format such as braille or audio CD please contact Hastoe Hub.

## Telephone

0300 123 2250

## Out of hours emergencies

0345 266 6527

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We value fairness and diversity. We strive to do the best we can and to improve to achieve excellence. External organisations check that we mean and do what we say, and have accredited us. These include:



IN business for neighbourhoods means we have made a set of promises – to customers, neighbourhoods and excellence – in line with other National Housing Federation members.



Positive about disabled people means we have agreed to take action to meet five commitments regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees.



SHIFT provides an assessment of our sustainability performance.



Investors in People is a standard which helps organisations transform their business performance through staff development. Gold means we have achieved the highest standard of the award.



Stonewall works with a whole range of agencies- diversity champions - to address the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals in the wider community.