

CONDENSATION , DAMP AND MOULD ADVICE



Condensation is probably the biggest cause of damp in homes. If there's too much condensation in your home and it's not dealt with properly , it can lead to mould on walls , mildew on curtains and fabrics and can affect the health of people with breathing conditions.

REMEMBER – CONDENSATION OCCURS IN EVERY HOME.

Managing condensation and treating mould is a tenant's responsibility , unless it is caused by other issues such as a leaking pipe , or missing roof tiles.

Condensation mainly occurs during cold weather, and it tends to appear on cold surfaces where there is little movement of air , such as in the corners of rooms, near windows , or behind furniture.

THE FOLLOWING ADVICE WILL HELP YOU IDENTIFY AND REDUCE CONDENSATION AS WELL AS TREATING THE MOULD GROWTH OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH IT.

THE MAIN TYPES AND CAUSES OF DAMPNES?

Rising damp

This is due to a defective (or non-existent) damp course. This will leave a 'tide mark' about 1m above the floor. Suspected instances of rising damp should be reported via the BHEMB repairs service who will arrange further investigation by a suitably qualified professional.

The presence of Black mould growth is rarely seen with rising damp as ground salts prevent mould.

Penetrating dampness

This is caused by moisture entering the house through for example leaking pipes, a damaged roof, blocked gutters, gaps around windows frames and cracked or defective rendering and brickwork.

These instances must be reported and be addressed via the BHEMB repairs service.

Condensation

What is condensation?

Condensation is caused by moisture in the air.

You can't see it but there is always some moisture in the air.

Warm air holds much more moisture than cold air.

When this 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 bathroom mirror mists over when you have a bath or shower.

This is the most common cause of dampness in the home.

What causes condensation?

You are producing moisture all the time, simply by breathing.

Day to day activities produce the following amounts of condensation in your home:

- Two People = 3 pints
- Cooking = 6 pints
- Having a bath or shower = 2 pints
- Drying clothes = 9 pints

Avoiding condensation and mould growth

The following steps could help reduce condensation in your home, the main cause of black mould:

1. Produce less moisture

- Drying clothes outside
- Ensuring your tumble dryer is adequately vented
- Covering pans when cooking
- Closing internal kitchen and bathroom doors when steam is being produced
- Avoiding the use of paraffin and flue-less bottled gas heaters which release large amounts of moisture.

2. Improve ventilation to allow moist air to escape by:

- Opening trickle vents in windows when rooms are occupied
- Opening windows for a few minutes several times a day
- Opening windows whenever they steam up
- Using extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms
- Leaving a gap between walls and furniture to allow air to circulate

3. Heat your home wisely

Heating your home wisely will improve your comfort , save you money and reduce condensation levels at the same time.

- Use your Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRV's) on radiators to occasionally gently heat the cold surfaces of unused rooms to avoid condensation and mould forming.
- Ensure your heating is turned off or low when ventilating rooms to avoid wasting valuable heat.
- Use cost effective draught proofing measures where appropriate to avoid cold air penetrating your home.
- Loft and cavity wall insulation also reduces your energy bills and will keep your home warm whilst reducing condensation.

How to treat black mould

It is your responsibility to treat mould in your home that is the result of condensation.

Use a fungicidal wash to clean affected walls, ceilings and paintwork. These are sold in supermarkets and DIY stores. Make sure you buy one with a Health & Safety Executive (HSE) approval number and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Empty cupboards and wardrobes that have been affected by mould and thoroughly clean all the contents.

Dry clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets

Once you have successfully eliminated the mould, redecorate using fungicidal paint and fungicidal wallpaper paste. If you don't manage your condensation however, then mould is likely to return.

The only lasting way to avoid mould is to reduce condensation in your home.

WHEN DAMP AND MOULD IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

The majority of damp and mould is a result of too much condensation in your home, which only you can manage. However, it could be the result of the other issues like for example a leaking pipe or roof or missing tiles or gutters. If this is the case, or you suspect it, please contact BHEMB repairs service on **0800 328 4090**

For more information on Condensation and Mould Issues visit

<https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/housing/private-housing/damp-and-mould-advice>

This information can be made available in large print, Braille, audio/CD or in another language upon request.