



# Fact Sheet

## Condensation in the home

### What is condensation?

Condensation is caused when moist warm air comes in to contact with a cooler surface like a wall, or a window and cools forming water droplets. If this happens over a long period of time mould may start to grow.

### How is condensation caused?

All homes have some condensation but it occurs more in winter as your home is cooler and there is less ventilation as windows and vents are usually kept closed to keep heat in. It can also be caused through not heating your home sufficiently.

Condensation has become more common as energy conservation has increased. Natural ventilation has been greatly reduced by the introduction of double-glazing, draught excluders and the removal of open fires.

This change to everyday living causes condensation build-up for short periods in kitchens and bathrooms due to steam. It can also appear in the corner of rooms where ventilation and air movement is less.

### What are the main causes of condensation?

- Drying clothes on radiators
- Steam generated from baths and showers
- Poor ventilation
- Steam caused by cooking
- Split or faulty vent pipes on tumble dryers
- Portable heaters (bottled gas and paraffin)

### How can I help reduce condensation?

If you have an extractor fan fitted in your bathroom or kitchen - Please use it.

- Did you know that the average bathroom fan only costs around 15p (depending on your tariff) to run for 30 hours\* and a kitchen fan only costs around 15p (depending on your tariff) to run for 13 hours\*. If your fan has a trickle or economy facility, it will cost even less to run.

\*Estimated costs to run extractor fans based on;

*Bathroom* Xpelair CF20 @34w (This is based on the boost setting. The fan has a 'trickle facility' which operates when condensation is detected, which is more economical)

*Kitchen* Xpelair CF40 @77w

If you don't have an extractor fan:

- After a shower or bath, try to ventilate the room by opening a window and closing the door.
- Dry clothes outside or in a cool place in your home (it will take longer but less moisture will be held in the air). If you can't dry clothes outside due to bad weather, then dry the clothes in one room keeping the door closed and the window slightly open.
- When cooking or bathing keep the door closed and open a window.
- We advise you not use portable gas or paraffin heaters in your home due to the amount of condensation they generate.

## How can I remove mould?

You can reduce mould growth by removing condensation as soon as it forms by wiping the area with a dry cloth. Where there is mould, you can wipe the area with a diluted bleach solution or a mould treatment.

## What is damp?

Damp is caused when moisture comes through the external walls or the roof. This can be through loose or missing roof tiles, leaking gutters, missing pointing to brickwork, cracks in the wall or damage to the damp proof course.

Some of our older homes may not have a damp proof course which prevents soil moisture from rising up into living areas, this can occur in walls or under solid floors.

Damp is caused when moisture comes through external walls or the roof. This can be through loose or missing roof tiles, leaking gutters, missing pointing to brickwork, cracks in the wall or damage to the damp proof course.

You will be able to spot dampness if there is a tidemark on the wall which will show the height to which dampness has risen and there maybe a musty-type smell.

If there is evidence of damp in your home then please contact us on 0808 126 3123.

## For further information contact:

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