

ALLAN FULLER

— EST. 1983 —

Have you got Damp coming into your property?



It will surprise you but the answer is no!

Read on to find you why!

What has occurred is mould forming as a result of condensation.

WHAT IS CONDENSATION?

Condensation is water that has been released from the air. Air contains water vapour in varying quantities, how much it can hold depends on its temperature.

Warm air holds more moisture than cold air. When moist air comes in to contact with either colder air or a colder surface, the air is unable to retain the same amount of moisture and the water is released to form condensation in the air or on the surface.

Condensation is generally noticeable where it forms on non-absorbent surfaces, such as windows, mirrors, or tiles. However, it can form on any surface, and it may not be noticed until mould growth or rotting material occur. The Following sections explain further and give ideas on how to minimise the risk of this happening.

Condensation can occur during anytime of the year. Although, as the weather turns colder, condensation and mould can form more easily. Reports of mould tend to significantly increase during the colder months, from October to March. Over warmer months, issues are less common.

WHERE DOES THE MOISTURE COME FROM?

The moisture in the air comes from multiple sources within our homes. Water vapour is produced in relatively large quantities normal day to day activities.

FACT:

A five-person household puts about 10kg of water into the air every day (1 kg of water equates to about 1 litre).

- Breathing (asleep) 0.3 kg
- Breathing (awake) 0.85 kg
- Cooking
- Personal washing 1.0 kg
- Washing and drying clothes 5.5 kg

CONDITIONS IN WHICH CONDENSATION OCCURS

- The effect of moisture generation is made worse by keeping the moist air in the property -it is theoretically possible to avoid condensation by adequate ventilation. Usually in certain areas of a house (such as bathrooms and kitchens) the warm air contains a lot of moisture, if the air then spreads to cooler parts of the house, it will condense on any colder surface.
- Ventilation is only effective if consistent throughout the whole envelope of the property. Condensation is encouraged by poor air circulation where stagnant air pockets form (behind furniture and in cupboards)
- The first evidence is often the appearance of mould growth, as in the illustration.

It is important to let air circulate around your home. To reduce the presence of mould on clothes or other stored items, do not store shoes etc underneath cabinets, pull furniture slightly away from walls and do not overfill rooms, cupboards or shelves or display cabinets. Avoid cluttering

rooms with too many personal items prevent air from circulating freely and will be a leading cause to condensation problems.

- Modern lifestyles mean that many homes remain unoccupied and unheated throughout the greater part of the day, allowing the fabric of the building to cool down. The moisture producing activities are then concentrated into relatively short periods (morning and evening) when the structure is relatively cold while the building is still warming up.
- A combination of heating and ventilation is the main form of control. A change of air is recommended in all rooms in the property, at the very least, once a day. Firstly, however, you should ensure that the amount of moisture in the air is not excessive.

OK so this explains what causes Condensation, but you may well ask where does the mould come from?

The answer is just as simple. Mould is caused by invisible spores that are in the air all of the time, when they land on a damp surface they multiply and grow

The high humidity levels associated with condensation also enables house dust mites to flourish.

How you can take the vital steps to avoid condensation and the resultant mould.

VENTILATING THE PROPERTY by:

- Ventilating the room to the outside when using the bath or shower – open a window and close the door.
- Trying to increase the change of air in the premises by opening windows daily no longer than 30-60 minutes at a time to avoid over ventilating the property.
- Positioning furniture so that it's a little further away from walls, so air has a free flow around the room.
- Ensuring trickle vents flaps on windows are open and the air vents are unblocked.
- Ensuring extractor fans are on and in full working condition in both kitchens and bathrooms.
-

HEATING YOU HOME

- Ensuring heating is thermostatically controlled wherever possible at a temperature between 18-21C.
- Make use of any timer facility on your boiler to control heating throughout the day and night (this will also help your fuel bills).
- If possible, keep heating on, at a low setting, all day in colder weather. (This is also more economical than blasting the heating for short periods of time).
- Ensuring that when heating is turned up, this is for a minimum of 3 hours. Any less will worsen the problem as the air will absorb the water vapour more quickly than the walls can heat up. Thus, meaning that when heating is turned off, the air will cool quickly causing rapid condensation and cooling walls further.

SIGNS THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM.

If your house is too cold you will notice that:

- Your home, clothing and bedding will feel cold and damp.
- There will be a musty damp smell.
- You may notice some mould growth on furniture/external walls in cupboards/drawers, on or around windows and on your clothes/ bedding.
- Wallpaper may start peeling around windows or other areas.
- It takes a long time before your heating begins to take effect, leaving you not feeling properly warm, and walls are cold to touch.

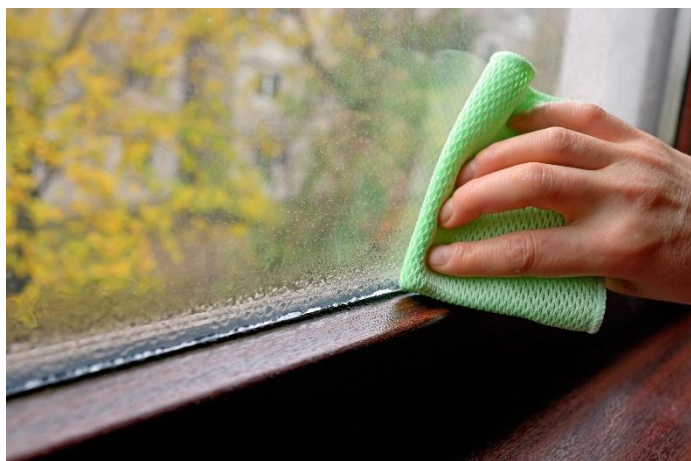
HOW TO CONTROL CONDENSATION: Look at the lifestyle within the building.

Produce less moisture by:

- Covering boiling pans.
- Open windows and close doors when cooking.
- Do not leave kettles and pans boiling longer than necessary.
- Hang washing outside to dry whenever you can.
- If you must use a tumble dryer, make sure it's vented to the outside.
- If you must dry washing indoors use one designated room, keep the door shut and the room well ventilated. (Do not use rooms that have no windows).
- Do not hang wet washing on radiators around your home doing this will cause major condensation problems.



- Wipe up any water puddles lying on windows/ windowsills, tiles, bath, walls and any surfaces throughout the property.



- Open windows when ironing.
- When bathing keep door shut and the room well ventilated. (Turn and leave on extractor fan).
- When filling your bath run the cold water first then add the hot – it reduces steam by 90%

REMOVING MOULD GROWTH

In the unfortunate case that mould might have appeared, here are the steps to take:

- Wash the affected area with an anti-mould cleaner or non-ammonia soap/detergent using hot water.
- Rinse and dry the affected area.
- Use an anti-mould disinfectant or dilute bleach once the area has been thoroughly cleaned to ensure that most microorganisms have been killed.
- Any fabrics/clothing/ soft furnishing should be put in the washing machine on as high temperature as possible without damaging the items.

You must report condensation and mould to us if we are managing your letting, if not, to your landlord, but, as you can see from the information above, you and your way of using the property have caused it, there is much you can do to resolve the cause.