

KEEPING YOUR HOME FREE FROM CONDENSATION AND DAMP



It is important to be able to tell the difference between moisture in your home caused by condensation, and damp caused by other factors such as rising damp, rainwater entering the property or defective plumbing.

Condensation

Condensation tends to get worse in cold weather and forms patches of black mould with blurred, soft edges rather than a stain mark.

Condensation occurs when the air and/or surfaces are cold and when the moisture content of the air is high.

Condensation occurs where there is little movement of air. It is usually found in corners, on or near windows and in or behind cupboards or wardrobes.

Damp

Rising damp can affect ground floor rooms and is caused by water from the ground getting into the walls and floors, often because a damp proof course (DPC) or damp proof membrane has failed.

If you think that you have rising damp, check for the following problems:

- Rubbish or soil piled up against the house above the level of the DPC,
- Blocked air bricks.

Penetrating damp is usually caused by structural problems in a building, such as faulty guttering or roofing, or cracks in the walls. It can also be caused by internal leaks, such as pipes under a sink or bath.

If you think that you have penetrating damp, check for the following problems:

- Missing or slipped roof tiles or slates,
- Broken or blocked guttering or down pipes,
- Rotten or leaking window sills,
- Damage or cracking to brickwork or external rendering,
- Leaking pipes around the bath, shower and sinks.

These causes of damp often leave a “tidemark”. If this is the case, you should report the necessary repairs to us to investigate and resolve.

Responsibilities

As a resident, you have responsibilities for:

- Preventing and treating the effects of condensation (see the guidance overleaf),
- Reporting repairs that could, or are, causing damp.

As a landlord, Castles and Coasts has responsibility for:

- Repairing any structural problems that could or are causing damp.

To report repairs, please contact Castles & Coasts Customer Services Team using one of the following methods:

Website: (Resident’s Portal)

www.castlesandcoasts.co.uk

Email:

cs@castlesandcoasts.co.uk

Telephone:

0800 085 1171

PREVENTING AND TREATING CONDENSATION AND MOULD



If condensation is not prevented, it can cause mould on your walls, furniture and clothing, and it can also make window frames rot. Left untreated, mould can increase the risk of respiratory illness.

What is condensation?

There is always some moisture in the air even if you can't see it. When the air gets colder, it can't hold all the moisture and tiny drops of water appear, this is condensation.

Condensation will occur on cold windows and walls when you are cooking, washing or having a bath. If there is inadequate ventilation, condensation will accumulate and leave pools of water that will encourage the growth of unsightly black mould. Although kitchens and bathrooms are generally the main rooms within a house that create steam and humidity, the condensation and mould is more likely to occur in colder areas such as bedrooms and behind cupboards.

Preventing condensation

These simple steps will help to prevent condensation occurring in your home.

To reduce the amount of water in the air:

- Put lids on saucepans,
- Dry clothes outside,
- If using a tumble dryer make sure it is vented to the outside,
- Put a small amount of cold water in the bath before you turn on the hot tap,
- Do not run your shower for longer than needed.

To stop water vapour spreading:

- Shut kitchen and bathroom doors when cooking and bathing,
- Use cooker hoods and extractor fans or open a window when cooking.

Heating your home:

- Apply more heat,
- Heat more evenly i.e. low level of heating all day rather than quick blasts when necessary, this should also reduce your heating bills,
- Use thermostats to control your heating,
- Avoid using bottled gas or paraffin heaters.

Ventilate your home:

- Keep a small window ajar or trickle vents open at all times,
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening windows to remove the humid air,
- Use extractor fans if you have them,
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when in use,
- Make sure other doors are closed, especially bedroom doors as they are normally slightly colder and will attract moisture,
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes and avoid putting too much in them as this stops air circulation,
- Do not put wardrobes against external walls,
- Keep furniture away from walls and allow air to circulate.

Treating condensation

You will need to take proper steps to deal with condensation, but some short term measures every home owner should take are:

- Wipe down your windows and window sills every morning using a cloth,
- Wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator.

Dealing with mould:

- Treat any mould you have in your property by washing walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash that carries a Health & Safety Executive approval number. Follow manufacturers' guide lines when using these products,
- If you do this and follow the other advice given above, mould should not reappear,
- The only lasting way to avoid severe mould is to reduce the relative humidity and condensation by properly heating and ventilating your home.