



Marsden

Damp Services Ltd

Condensation in your home...

A guide to the causes and how to remedy the problem

Condensation is the most common form of unwanted dampness in buildings. It is water from the air that forms as condensation. It is a relatively new problem and is a reflection on our modern lifestyle. On a daily basis we generate large amounts of moisture within our properties via cooking, baths, showers, drying clothes on radiators and even breathing.

We have provided this guide to assist you in determining whether you have a condensation problem in your home, and provide some guidance as to how you may be able to reduce the problem. We would still recommend that you consider a survey from one of our specialist surveyors, however we hope this guide helps you get a better idea of the problem you may have in your home.



What are the signs of Condensation?

- ✓ Water on the inside of windows
- ✓ Water running down walls
- ✓ Black Spot Mould
- ✓ Fungal growths within wardrobes, on clothes or furniture
- ✓ Musty Smell (this is caused by the fungus that accompanies the condensation)
- ✓ Bedding feeling damp/cold
- ✓ Feeling like you have a cold when you get out of bed (this is your nasal passage being affected by black spot mould spores)
- ✓ Dampness/mould growths commonly found in corners, near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards

You are most likely to find mould on cold areas, and areas that lack ventilation. In the corner of a room, behind a bed/couch/wardrobe, in a wardrobe (sometimes on clothing), on external walls, where your ceiling meets the wall (due to loft insulation not always being right to the edge of the ceiling, leaving a cold spot around the perimeter of the room), and around windows/doors.

Mould Cleaning

Regular cleaning away of mould is vital. To remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a preparatory mouldicide or fungicidal wash which carries a Health and Safety Executive number. Follow the manufacturer's instructions precisely. Spray containers of mouldicide can be obtained from chemists and DIY retailers.

Do not use bleach!

Dry clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets.

The most effective way to reduce mould is to reduce moisture.

Is condensation and mould bad for your health?

One of the most common questions we are asked is about health problems caused by mould. We have heard for years the evils of black spot mould and how dangerous it is.

All houses contain billions of mould spores. Virtually every human, in every location of earth inhales hundreds of thousands of mould spores on a daily basis. Contrary to common belief, there is currently no evidence that the presence of these moulds and the exposures to them threaten the health of members of the public.

In 2009, the World Health Organisation published its position paper on indoor moulds and air quality, which reinforced the findings of the 2004 Institute of Medicine mould study group. In that study, the IOM stated there was insufficient evidence to find a casual association between the presence of moulds and any of the claimed adverse health effects.

The WHO and the IOM, however, both concluded there was an association between damp living spaces and some adverse health effects. Therefore the problem is the moisture, and the poor air quality. The mould is just visual evidence of the problem. The WHO advise that the emphasis should be put on reducing moisture and increasing ventilation.

The most important thing is to reduce moisture levels in the property. There are several ways you can contribute to this yourself -

- ✓ Avoid drying laundry on a radiator or an airer. If you need to do this, try to ventilate the area. You could always put a small dehumidifier in a room with an airer, or put an airer in the bathroom with the door closed and an extractor fan on
- ✓ Keep bathroom/kitchen doors shut when the rooms are in use, and open a window to assist in ventilation, to stop the moisture reaching other rooms
- ✓ Make sure tumble driers are completely vented through an external wall or open window
- ✓ Keep lids on pans and use a good extractor if you have one
- ✓ If you have an extractor fan, make sure it is on whenever there is moisture in the air, in the kitchen and bathroom. Leave on for a significant time period after showers, baths and cooking to help clear out as much of the moisture as possible
- ✓ When filling the bath, run the cold water first then add the hot, it will reduce the steam which leads to condensation by up to 90%
- ✓ Where possible, put free standing furniture against internal walls (which are not as cold as external). The bigger the gap the better, so air can circulate around the room.
- ✓ Don't clutter. Don't over fill wardrobes and cupboards, as there will be a lack of ventilation. Don't pile items such as clothes.
- ✓ Provide moderate and constant heat in your home, which helps to avoid creating cold surfaces
- ✓ Avoid using bottled gas heaters (Calor etc.) as they produce about 8 pints of moisture from an average sized gas bottle

