

## what is **condensation and mould**?

Condensation appears on cold surfaces as a result of excess moisture in the air combined with poor ventilation and lack of heating. It can affect any property regardless of age and level of insulation. If left, this condensation turns to mould.

Mould can damage the fabric of the property (such as around windows, spots on curtains and walls) as well as not being good for health if it is allowed to build up to an extreme level. So it is important that it is tackled at the first sign of it (this includes washing it off the affected area, ideally with a mould spray).

Condensation and mould are frequently mistaken for building defects, but in the vast majority of cases there is no issue with the building and it can be completely cured by adjustments in tenant behaviour.

## where does **it occur**?

Condensation will occur in any room where there is excess moisture combined with a lack of heating and/or ventilation. Cold walls and internal windows (particularly bedroom windows overnight) are common areas for condensation. Also inside closed wardrobes (on clothes) and behind furniture due to lack of ventilation and low temperatures.

## how to **reduce condensation**

### 1. IMPROVE VENTILATION:

- **Open the 'trickle vents' (aka condensation vents) on windows if you have them (located at the top of the window).**
- **Turn on extractor fans** in the bathroom and kitchen (if fitted) or slightly open a window when taking a shower, bath or cooking.
- **Leave windows slightly open** for 30 minutes after showering or cooking to get rid of the excess moisture in the air. Open at least one window in each room for some part of the day to renew the air. If your property has tilt and turn style windows, use the tilt position.
- **Keep radiators uncovered** and move furniture away from the outside walls to allow air to circulate.
- **Do not block wall vents** – these are there to allow the building to breath and prevent condensation.
- **Open curtains during the day.** By leaving curtains closed, you will create a cold space with no circulating air. Perfect conditions for condensation and mould. Open your curtains every morning to allow air within the room to flow carry away moisture.
- **Allow air to circulate in cupboards and wardrobes.** By keeping cupboard doors closed, air cannot circulate and mould can form on items within the cupboard. Ensure the doors are left slightly open and clothes not packed too tightly together to ensure air can circulate in these areas.

### 2. TURN UP THE HEATING:

- The colder your home is, the more likely you are to suffer from condensation. The process of heating your home will reduce the relative humidity. Heating will counter-balance the moisture produced by modern living.
- Try to make sure that all rooms are at least partially heated. To prevent condensation, the heat has to keep room surfaces reasonably warm, above 15°C (this will stop condensation forming on external walls). It takes time for a cold building to warm up, so it is better to have a small amount of heat for a long period than a lot of heat for a short period.

### 3. PRODUCE LESS MOISTURE

- **Dry clothes outside whenever possible.**
- **If drying clothes inside, do so in a well-ventilated, heated room.**
- **Wipe down windows and window sills every morning** to remove any standing water produced by condensation before it turns black.
- **Use a tumble drier** - though we appreciate this can cost more in energy.
- **Use your Aero 360 moisture absorbing device if provided** – certain properties are more susceptible to condensation (i.e. older properties with single glazing) and we have provided small passive moisture absorbers known as 'Aero 360s' in these properties which will help reduce the amount of condensation on windows in the morning.

## what to do if you **spot mould**

In the first instance of spotting mould, please wipe it off with a damp cloth. If it is engrained, we recommend spraying HG Mould Spray (available on Amazon and the St Andrews Hardware Store at the end of South Street – next to Genetta's). Link:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/HG-186050106-Mould-Spray/dp/B000IU40HQ?th=1>

If you are still experiencing an issue following this, please report it to us via our maintenance reporting system (link on our website and in our email footers).

Lawson & Thompson will inspect the property and advise you whether the mould / dampness is a result of condensation, structural problems or plumbing defects. If repairs are necessary we will make arrangements to have these carried out by a reputable, independent company.