

## What to do if you notice damp and mould in your home?

If you are a council tenant or living in temporary accommodation and notice there is damp and mould in your property, you should contact the mould removal team via:

Hotline: **(020) 8871 8887**

Email: [mould.removal@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:mould.removal@wandsworth.gov.uk)

Wandsworth Housing Online:  
[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housing](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housing)

## After you have reported the issue

Once you have reported a problem arrangements will be made for any mould to be removed and the property inspected by a housing officer trained to inspect, diagnose and advise on repair and improvement options to tackle the underlying cause of the problem.

You will also be provided with detailed advice as to how to reduce and prevent condensation, damp and mould in your property. If repairs or improvements are needed the housing officer will provide details of the works and an indication as to when they will be completed.

On completion of any works you will be contacted to ensure that you are satisfied with the standard of the repairs or improvements. Should there be a re-occurrence of mould growth you will need to contact the mould removal team again who will arrange for the mould to be removed and further investigation will take place.

**Problems with persistent condensation, dampness or water penetration should be reported to your area team if you are a council tenant or the property management team if you are in temporary accommodation.**

### Housing contacts:

Central Area: (020) 8871 5333

Eastern Area: (020) 8871 7439

Southern Area: (020) 8871 7288

Western Area: (020) 8871 5530

Property Management Team:  
(020) 8871 8846

**For tenants whose first language is not English, our housing officers can arrange translation services during any home visit or inspection and this leaflet can be translated into a different language on request.**

**If you need this leaflet in an alternative format (eg. large print or audio) please call (020) 8871 6800**

**[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housing](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housing)**

# CONDENSATION DAMP & MOULD

## Guidance notes for residents

## What is condensation?

Condensation is one of the most common causes of damp and is caused by a combination of excess moisture in the air and poor ventilation. When warm moist air comes into contact with a cold surface and cools, it condenses as water on the surface. The condensation may then soak into wallpaper, paintwork or even plasterwork and attract black mould which can grow on the surface.

Condensation is prevalent in the colder winter months, and is often formed in the corners of rooms, near windows and in areas where there is poor air circulation, such as behind wardrobes and beds.

There are many different causes of condensation, and depending on the household size, more than 20 litres of moisture can be produced into the air within a 24 hour period through everyday living. For example, a two-person household can produce approximately:

- **Breathing** (16 hours) - 1.7 litres of moisture
- **Bath/shower** - 1.1 litres of moisture
- **Drying clothing indoors** - 5.1 litres of moisture
- **Cooking and using a kettle** - 3.4 litres of moisture
- **Washing dishes** - 1.1 litres of moisture
- **Bottled gas heater** (8 hours) - 2.3 litres of moisture

The moisture is produced slowly throughout each day in different rooms across the home, with certain rooms such as the kitchen and the bathroom being the biggest contributors of condensation.

Usually condensation disperses fairly quickly and does not cause more than a minor issue. However, condensation can become a major problem for households who struggle to heat and ventilate their home, and this becomes a lot worse in the winter months.

## Can condensation be reduced?

### Heating your home

Condensation is more likely to be a problem in the cold winter months, so where possible it is important to try to maintain a warm environment - constant low heating is better than extreme hot and cold.

If you are worried about the cost of heating your home and would like some advice and support then please visit the Cost of Living Hub which contains information on the support that is available for residents.

#### Cost of living hub:

[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/cost-of-living-hub](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/cost-of-living-hub)

### Ventilating your home

Keeping your home ventilated is one of the most important steps in tackling the problem of condensation. For example, when a room is in use, condensation can be reduced by: keeping windows slightly open, using an extractor fan (if you have one) and ensuring that air vents are not covered. Keeping kitchen and bathroom doors closed when in use will also prevent steam from escaping into colder rooms.

### Vacuum regularly

Mould feeds on dust, and vacuuming helps to remove mould spores and the dust.

### Warmth versus ventilation

It is very important to strike a balance between warmth and ventilation. By opening windows it may seem that you are losing heat, but you are actually removing warm moisture-laden air and refreshing your home with cool dry air which is cheaper to heat. So not only do you reduce condensation, but your home also becomes more affordable to heat meaning you save money and have a healthier living environment.

### Reducing and removing moisture

Simple acts can also make a big difference, such as covering pans when cooking, drying clothing outside if you have outdoor space, using a vented tumble dryer, and increasing air circulation in your home by increasing gaps between furniture and walls.

You may notice that condensation is present on windows throughout the day and especially in the mornings. It is therefore good practice to wipe windows and sills with a clean dry cloth each morning to remove any water that has settled and remember to keep sills clutter free.

### Different types of damp

Although condensation can create damp in the home, increasing the chance of mould growth, damp can also be a result of other issues.

### Leaks/penetrating damp

Dampness can be caused by water leaking through internal damaged pipework, a failed stopcock or via faulty bath/window seals. Penetrating damp is a result of external moisture entering the home through its external structure and is made worse during periods of heavy rainfall. This is often a result of gaps in brickwork, roof or windows, and if there are structural issues (e.g. broken guttering, roof defects or window frames).

### Rising damp

Rising damp mainly affects basement level and ground floor properties, with moisture rising from the earth effecting flooring, plaster, wallpaper and skirting boards which is caused by a defective or non-existent damp proof membrane. Rising damp is likely to occur throughout the year but will be more prominent during colder months.