

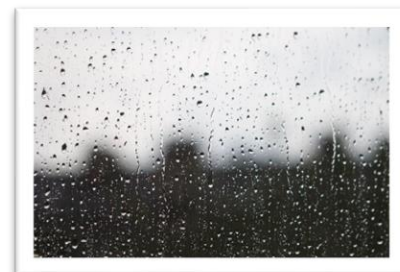
DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION



WHAT IS CONDENSATION?

Moisture is always in the air, even when you cannot see it.

As the air gets colder, it cannot hold all of the moisture and tiny drops of water appear on cold surfaces. You will have noticed it when you can see your breath on a cold day or if your mirror mists over in the bathroom.



It occurs normally during cold weather and unlike other forms of dampness; it does not leave a tidemark. Look for it in corners, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It will often form on north facing walls which are particular cold spots.

Is this the only cause of DAMP in my home?

Condensation is not the only cause of damp. It can also come from:

- Leaking pipes, wastes or overflow pipes
- Rain seeping through the roof where a tile or slate is missing
- Blocked gutters
- Rising damp - due to a defective damp-proof course or because there is none. This only occurs on ground floor walls and can usually identified by a tidemark up to 1 metre above the ground
- Rain penetrating around window frames or leaking through a cracked pipe

What is MOULD?

If you do not remove condensation it can turn into mould.

Mould can grow wherever there are damp surfaces in your home. Mildew is the most common type of black mould, and can be identified by black pinpricks or spots and will form on walls, ceilings and even furnishings. Mould is a fungus that spreads from airborne spores and can cause structural and health issues.

The mould can be treated but first you must remove the main cause of condensation/dampness in the home.



Our everyday activities add extra moisture to the air inside our homes

Even our breathing adds some moisture (remember breathing on cold windows and mirrors to fog them up?). One person asleep adds half a pint of water to the air overnight and at twice that rate when active during the day.

To give you some idea as to how much extra water this could be in a day, [did you know?](#)

- 2 people at home can produce = 3 pints
- A bath or shower = 2 pints
- Drying clothes indoors = 9 pints

- Cooking and use of a kettle = 6 pints
- Washing dishes = 2 pints
- Bottled gas heater (8 hour use) = 4 pints

Total moisture added in one day - 26 pints or 14.8 litres

Top tips to help prevent mould

- Use radiators to warm and dry the air. Don't cover them!
- Close bathroom and kitchen doors while cooking, bathing or doing laundry to prevent moisture spreading to other rooms
- Cook with pan lids on, and turn the heat down when boiled- this also saves energy!
- Use covers for fish tanks
- Wipe away condensation that builds up on glass, window frames or window sills with a dry cloth
- Use a cleaning product containing fungicide for longer term protection against small areas of mould
- Keep window trickle vents open to help circulate air, if you do not have trickle vents installed, keep your windows on the latch whenever possible
- Use your extractor fans as much as possible, but especially when cooking, bathing or drying clothes
- Hang your washing outside to dry if possible. Where this is not possible, dry washing on an airer in a small room, with the door closed, a window slightly open or extractor fan on. Do not dry clothes in front of a fire or over radiators
- Avoid putting large furniture up against cold external walls
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes - avoid putting too many things in cupboards.
- If you are running a bath, put the cold water in first. This reduces the amount of steam.
- Vent tumble dryers to the outside air, unless they are the self-condensing type.



Extractor Fans

The use of extractor fans in your home is crucial to help prevent damp and mould, they help by removing humid air from a building to reduce the condensation that causes damp. Ensure your extractor fan is regularly cleaned, if they become clogged or blocked they will stop working effectively.

Extractor fan issues?

If your extractor fan isn't working- please report it to our customer services team. If you don't have an extractor fan, and think you should, please let us know and we can assess if you'd benefit from one.

Heating your home

During cold weather, make sure there is some low level heating on all day, even when there is no-one at home. It is better to provide a low level of heating all day rather than in short bursts. If you have night storage heaters, talk to your energy supplier. They may be able to change your off-peak heating to one that provides a mid-afternoon boost.

Avoid using paraffin and portable flueless bottled-gas heaters. These heaters put a lot of moisture into the air- one gallon of gas or paraffin produces about one gallon of water!

Problem with your heating?

If you have a problem with your heating then please report this to our customer services team, who will be able to assist and advise.

Struggling with your utility bills?

If you are in financial hardship and struggling with the increased costs in utility bills, please get in touch, we may be able to support you with our household support fund, alternatively you can apply for this via our website, here [English Rural | Household Support Fund](#)

What can English Rural do to help?

When we receive reports of damp, mould and condensation, our first step is to gather information on the issues, our customer services team may ask you some or all of the following questions:

- Which rooms are affected? Is this to walls and/or ceilings?
- To which elevation of the building is it most apparent? (i.e. front, rear or side and if side is this an outside wall or to an adjoining property)
- Is condensation visible on windows etc?
- Is there a possible cause (ie- gutters leaking, extractor fans faulty etc)
- What is the household set up? How many occupants? Any children or vulnerable adults?
- Has this happened before?
- Has this been reported before? If so what action was taken?
- How long has the mould/damp been present?



We may also request pictures of the damp and mould, all information is shared with our team of Repairs and Maintenance Surveyors who will advise on the best course of action. Every case we receive is assessed on an individual, case by case basis.

Get in touch

We take reports of damp, condensation and mould seriously and want to proactively work with our residents to tackle the issue of mould and damp in our homes. We would urge any resident who has concerns to contact our customer services team immediately, this can be done via the **resident portal**, email us at repairs@englishrural.org.uk or contact us over the phone on **0800 121 44 22**