

Reduce damp, mould and condensation in your home

A Guide for Customers



Introduction

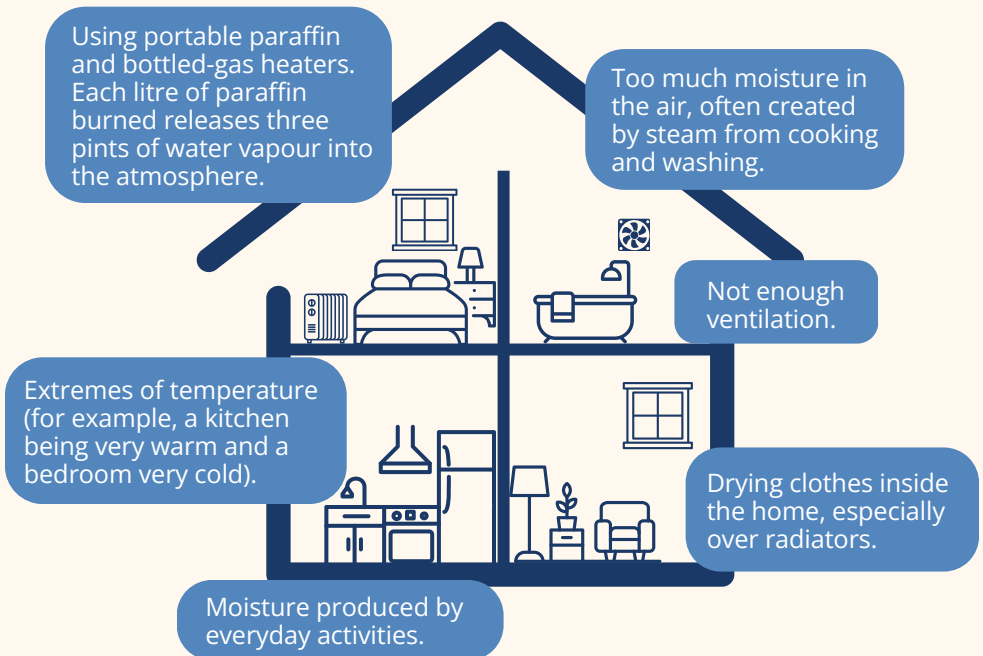
This leaflet explains what condensation is and what steps you can take to reduce it.

What is condensation?

Condensation happens when moisture in warm air comes into contact with a cold surface and turns into water droplets.

Condensation also forms in cold rooms when there is little movement of air. Condensation can form behind furniture, in corners of rooms, in wardrobes and window areas.

What causes condensation?



What condensation can do to your home

Condensation can cause mould to form on walls, furniture, and soft furnishings (for example, curtains). It can even damage plasterwork, rot wooden window frames and allow mould to form on PVCu window frames.

Damp conditions can also increase the number of house mites.

If anyone in your home has a breathing condition such as asthma or bronchitis, it is important that you control condensation because mould and house mites may make these conditions worse.

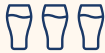
The moisture being produced in your home

Our everyday activities add extra moisture to air inside our homes. Even breathing adds some moisture, remember when you breathe on cold windows and mirrors it mists them up. Here are the idea of how much moisture could be produced in a day:



= one pint

Two people active
for one day



Washing clothes

Cooking and
boiling a kettle



Drying clothes

Having a bath or
shower



Using paraffin or
bottled-gas heater

**Total amount of moisture
produced in your home in one day: 24 pints**

Simple things you can do to reduce levels of condensation in your home

- Dry your windows and window sills every morning.
- In the kitchen and bathroom, dry any surfaces that get wet.
- Wring out your used cloth rather than drying it on a radiator or in front of a heater.
- Use a fungicidal cleaner to clean any walls, ceilings and paintwork affected by mould.
- Use a mould and mildew remover that carries a Health & Safety Executive (HSE) approved number, and make sure you follow the instructions.
- If you use a tumble dryer, make sure it is vented to the outside (unless it's a condensing dryer).
- Always cook with pan lids on and turn the heat down once the water has boiled. Only use the minimum amount of water for cooking.



- When filling your bath, run the cold water first then add the hot. This will reduce the amount of steam by 90%.
- Don't use your gas cooker to heat your kitchen. Burning gas produces moisture. If your windows mist up, this is a sign of moisture.
- Avoid drying your clothes on radiators or in front of a fire. Hang your washing outside or in the bathroom with the door closed and window slightly open.
- Always make sure you put the extractor fan on if you have one.

Ventilating your home

Ventilation can help reduce condensation in your home by allowing moist air to escape and drier air from outside to come in. Here are some ways you can increase the ventilation in your home.

- For about 30 minutes a day, leave a small window downstairs and a small one upstairs slightly open. The windows should be on opposite sides of the home, or diagonally opposite if you live in a flat. At the same time, open all the inside doors. This will allow drier air to circulate throughout your home. This is called 'cross ventilation'.
- When cooking, washing up or washing by hand, open a window slightly, this is as good as opening it fully. Switch on your extractor hood or extractor fan if you have one.
- When using your kitchen and bathroom, close the door to prevent moisture escaping to the rest of the home and open a small window afterwards for about 20 minutes.
- Use an extractor fan if you have one. They are cheap to run and are effective in quickly removing moisture from a room.
- Leave your bedroom window slightly open at night. Always use trickle ventilators if you have them.
- Keep a small gap between large pieces of furniture and the walls. And if possible, place wardrobes and other furniture against internal walls rather than external walls. Never overfill wardrobes and cupboards as this restricts the flow of air.



Keeping your home at a constant temperature

Warm air holds more moisture than cooler air. So cool air is more likely to leave droplets of condensation round your home.

Air is like a sponge, the warmer it is, the more moisture it will hold. Heating one room to a high temperature and leaving other rooms cold makes condensation worse in the rooms that aren't heated. It is better to have a constant level of heat throughout your home, ideally between 17°C and 21°C when heating the property.

Keeping the temperature constant will help control condensation and works out cheaper than constantly heating a cold home to the temperature you want from scratch.



Moisture in a new home

There are two main sources of moisture in a new home:

Moisture from the construction stage

A lot of water is added during construction, particularly by activities like concreting, laying screed floors, bricklaying, plastering and painting. Up to 8000 litres of water (about 800 full buckets) may be included in mixtures and materials as construction proceeds, though this varies depending on the design of the home.

This construction moisture will steadily dry out over time with much escaping directly to the outdoor air. However, it also contributes to the moisture inside a newly-built home.

Additionally, rainwater may dampen parts of the structure before the roof and walls are completed and this can add to the amount of moisture that needs to be dried out.

Moisture generated by occupants

Normal living activities add significant amounts of moisture inside our homes everyday.

Households that generate the most moisture will be closer to the limits that their homes are designed for, particularly during the time when construction moisture is drying out. If this applies to you, see if you can reduce the amount of moisture you generate and give special attention to increasing your ventilation and ensuring your heating is switched on in cool and cold weather.



If you follow the advice in this leaflet you should begin to notice a considerable improvement within four to six weeks.

However, if the problem continues, it may be due to another problem.

If you are struggling with damp, mould or condensation in your home, please contact us as soon as possible - we are here to help.

Ways to report DMC



Telephone: 01386 420800



Report it via the Live Chat function on the repairs webpage



Fill out the online form on the DMC area on our website, upload photos of the worst affected areas



Email: enquiries@rooftopgroup.org



Contact your Neighbourhood Housing Officer or a Rooftop member of staff

It's also very important that you **allow our inspectors and contractors access to your home**. Without access, repairs can be delayed.

If you would like this information in another format or language, please contact:

Rooftop Housing Group
70 High Street
Evesham
Worcestershire
WR11 4YD