

YOUR GUIDE TO: Condensation



Our Assets

Warrington Housing Association

Your Guide to: Condensation

Everyday things like cooking, washing, bathing and even breathing cause moisture, which is released into the air. The air can only hold a certain amount of water vapour - the warmer it is, the more it can hold. If this is cooled by contact with a cold surface such as mirror, a window or even a wall, the water vapour will turn into droplets of water - condensation. This is what happens for instance when a mirrors mists up in the bathroom.

What does condensation look like?

Meet condensation, I'm sure everyone is all too familiar with this, the classic condensation on a window. Seen all over during autumn and winter, especially after a good nights sleep.



Mould behind a wardrobe. Condensation has settled on a cold outside wall, the lack of air movement because the free standing wardrobe allows mould to grow unchecked. Black marks above skirting boards and behind beds is another area black mould gathers, a bed situated close to the wall hinders air flow.



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How to tell the difference between a leak and condensation



A Water stain on the ceiling. A large but typical water stain on a ceiling, the brown tea colouration is the hallmark of a leak as compared to the black mould or shadowy look of a condensation mark. This holds true in 80% of cases. Below shadowy wet look of condensation and mould.



What causes condensation?

In times gone by houses would have had single glazing, air vents built into the brickwork and open fireplaces that would have literally drawn the air

from outside. Whilst this may have been a lot colder to live in, the air was constantly refreshed. Welcome to the present day, now we try to keep the heat in as much as possible, double glazed windows, doors, draught excluders, insulated cavity walls and roof spaces. It's all about saving energy and keeping the heat in as much as possible. Unfortunately that also means keeping the air in no matter how damp or stale it has become. Also adding to this are showers, unvented tumble driers, airing the washing indoors and cooking, every activity just mentioned including breathing will add vast amounts of moisture into the air.

Top contributors to mould and condensation



Drying washing indoors - It gets cold the washing no longer dry's outside, so on the radiator it goes. Now bearing in mind an un vented tumble drier can produce up to 7 Litres of water per day.

Hot showers and baths create airborne moisture. Cooking, steam from pans.

Boiling a kettle, multiple occupancy and breathing are all contributory factors to airborne moisture.

Condensation can get so bad that the walls and plaster are damp to the touch or are literally wet to the touch. This is where the condensation is so bad that it makes the plaster and brickwork wet



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internally, this then conducts the cold from the outside even better than before.

please contact Warrington Housing Association on 01925 246810

How to manage condensation

Do not dry washing indoors - a vented tumble drier will blow all the moisture from the drying process down a pipe and outside the house.

Baths and showers - if you have an extractor fan always use it. Secondly open the window whilst in the shower and if possible leave open for a while afterwards; however this may not be as effective during the winter months as outside humidity increases.

Cooking - put lids on the pans, this will help to capture almost all of the moisture.

Breathing - Open trickle vents on windows at night and if possible open in a locked position if safe to do so.

Boiling a Kettle - Try to vent the room by opening trickle vents on windows.

Do Not Block Permanent Ventilators

How to clean mould and treat the affected area

To kill and remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash and allow the area to dry. Follow the manufacturer's instructions precisely.

Wallpaper will need to be removed in the affected area. After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring. If wallpaper is to be replaced it should be replaced only after the condensation has been eliminated and a fungicidal wallpaper paste should be used.

Remember always follow the manufacturers instructions. If you need further help or advice



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