

# FACT SHEET



## Condensation

### What is condensation?

Condensation occurs when warm moist air meets a cold surface. As air cools it stops being able to hold all the moisture and turns into water causing condensation. Condensation can be produced when doing ordinary household activities, such as cooking and bathing when warm air meets outside walls and windows.

We also produce moisture when we breathe. This can be as much as a pint while we sleep, which is why bedroom windows are often misted up in the morning after a cold night.

### How can you control it?

Condensation can cause mould on windows, walls, ceiling and even clothes in cupboards. This will appear on cold surfaces and in places where there is very little air movement. To control condensation you need to find the right balance between insulation, heating, moisture and ventilation.

#### Insulate:

Condensation occurs on cold spots. Warming up cold spots will help control condensation.

Longhurst is helping to control cold spots and making your home cheaper to heat by having a planned programme of fitting double glazed windows, upgrading central heating and insulating lofts and walls.

#### Heat

Try to avoid cold areas in the home. In cold weather it is better to heat the whole home to a lower temperature rather than than one room to a higher temperature.

Mould does not always occur in the room where the moisture starts. For example you could be cooking in the kitchen but condensation will form in the cold spare bedroom that is not heated.

Efficient use of heating and controls will save you money and enable you to heat more of your home.

#### Reduce moisture:

You can cut down condensation by reducing moisture in your home.

- If you use a tumble dryer make sure it has an outside vent. Drying clothes in an un-vented tumble dryer can make 10 pints of water.
- Dry washing outside as much as possible. If you have to dry inside then put it in the bathroom, open a window or put the fan on and close the door. This will let the moisture go

outside rather than circulate it around your home.

- Put cold water into the bath before you fill it with hot water.
- Keep kitchen and bathroom doors shut to stop moisture moving around your home.
- Wipe condensation from windows and cills when it occurs.
- When you cook choose the right size pan for the food and always put the lid on.
- Only fill kettles with the amount of water you need and don't leave it boiling. This will also cost you less in fuel bills.
- Always use a paper underlay to soak up moisture if you have foam back carpets and a concrete floor.

## Ventilate

Airing your home by opening windows or trickle vents a little and using extractor fans will allow the moisture to escape.

- If you have an extractor fan in your bathroom use it when you have a bath or shower. Extractor fans use less energy than a light bulb and are cheap to run.
- Open the window one notch for half an hour after bathing to get rid of moisture.
- When cooking use an extractor fan or open the window one notch to let moisture out.
- If you have trickle vents above the windows keep them open all the time.
- Don't block air vents
- Leave a space between your furniture and the walls – this will help moist air to circulate and prevent mould growth.

## Decorating

If you have damp spores on your wall you need to take the following steps before you decorate over them:

- Wash walls with industrial strength inhibitor (halophen – available from any builders merchants). Ordinary household bleach does not kill the spores.
- Paint over affected areas with an oil based paint (i.e. white gloss undercoat).
- Then cover with normal emulsion paint.

This should stop the stain from returning.

## Doing our bit

You need to do all you can to stop condensation building up in your home and becoming serious. Not all damp problems are condensation and may be caused by something else that we need to look at.

If you have tried to stop the problem, but need more information, please call us on 0800 111 4013.

This leaflet is also available in:



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