

Preventing mould and damp

Our Commitment

Sentinel is committed to helping you maintain your home. This customer information sheet includes a number of tips to help you prevent mould and damp forming.

Condensation

Condensation is caused by a lot of moisture in the air that cannot escape from a building. It appears mainly in the cold weather, whether it's raining or dry. You can find it on cold surfaces and in places with little airflow, for example, in corners, behind furniture, in cupboards, or on or around windows.

The air can only hold a certain amount of water, and warm air can hold more moisture than cold air. Condensation happens when warm air comes into contact with cold air or a cold surface. When warm, moist air in your home meets something colder, like a window or wall, it releases the moisture as tiny drops of water.

The Cause

A typical cause of condensation in your home might be warm, moist air being produced in your kitchen or bathroom and then being allowed to circulate around the house to unheated rooms. If you don't get rid of condensation, it can turn into mould.

Mould is fungi, which are simple plants that will grow wherever there are damp surfaces in your home. The first sign that condensation in your home is a problem is black pinpricks of mould on walls, ceilings and even furnishings.

Although condensation is not the only cause of mould it is the most common cause, so here are some tips on how to keep condensation to a minimum.

Increase air flow.

- Keep outside vents and trickle vents open and clear.
- Open windows when you are at home.
- Avoid putting too many things in cupboards.
- Leave space between furniture and walls to allow air to circulate.

Reduce 'cold spots'.

- Make sure all your rooms have suitable heating. In cold weather it is better to provide a low level of heating all day rather than short high bursts.
- If you have electrical (night storage) heating, talk to your energy supplier. They may be able to change your off-peak heating tariff to one that provides a mid-afternoon boost.

Reduce moisture in the air.

- Dry clothing outdoors or in a well-ventilated room (open windows).
- If you use a tumble dryer, make sure it has a ventilation pipe leading outside.
- Open a window or use an extractor fan if you can when cooking, so steam can escape.
- Keep a lid on saucepans as you cook and don't let the kettle boil over to reduce steam.
- After having a bath or shower, open the bathroom window for 10 minutes and close the bathroom door to stop heat from the rest of the house being lost.
- Try not to use portable gas or paraffin heaters as these produce a pint of moisture for every pint burnt.
- Open a window or use an extractor fan if you can when cooking, so steam can escape.
- Keep a lid on saucepans as you cook and don't let the kettle boil over to reduce steam.

Treat problem areas.

- Wipe down windows and window-sills every morning in cold weather.
- Remove and kill mould by wiping down surfaces with a fungicidal wash (this should have a Health and Safety Executive 'approval number').
- When redecorating, use a good quality anti-fungicidal paint to help stop mould appearing again. You can get this from most DIY stores.
- Don't brush or vacuum the mould as this can increase the amount of mould spores in the air.

If you would like

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in large print, braille or translated please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0800 195 5515 from a landline or 0300 666 5515 from your mobile.

