

Condensation & Damp

What is Condensation?

Condensation forms because moisture in the air can no longer be held as vapour, so returns to liquid form. While condensation is obvious when it occurs on window glass, cold water pipes, ceramic tiles it will also form on any surface which is at, or lower than, dew point.

How to recognise condensation?

Practically, diagnosis of condensation cannot be just visual. Measurement of temperature, humidity, ventilation and consideration of insulation qualities and heating patterns need to be undertaken.

However, typical signs of condensation to look out for are:

- Mould growth on wall surfaces, around external wall openings and in areas of low air circulation or poor ventilation;
- Misty Wall Surface;
- Water staining and streaking on walls, particularly in bathrooms and kitchens;
- Patches of damp with no obvious edges.

What action is required?

Double glazing and improved insulation means we have warmer homes, but unless a property is adequately ventilated, it can become damp.

We ask all owners to ensure that their apartments are sufficiently ventilated by taking a few simple precautions stated below in order to avoid condensation and the buildup of damp.

BEDROOMS .Open bedroom windows when you go to bed at night; a 10 mm gap will do. If it is too cold to do this, wipe the condensation off the windows first thing in the morning, but please do not put the cloth you used on the radiator to dry as this will create more condensation

SHOWER/BATHROOM. Ensure full use of extractor or ventilation fans. Where these are not provided, open a window after bathing or showering to give the steam and damp air chance to escape. Wipe windows, walls and mirrors to remove condensation (a microfiber cloth is the most efficient means of doing this), and dry the shower tray or bath. Keep the door closed while the bathroom is in use to prevent to steam escaping to other parts of the house.

KITCHEN . When cooking, cover pans. Use extractor or ventilation fans where provided. If you do not have an automatic kettle, take care to ensure it is not left boiling.

LIVING AREAS. Where there are chimneys. Do not block them up. If a wall appears to be damp, do not put furniture right up against it; allow some circulation of air.

GENERAL. Make sure that any ventilation bricks or openings in the building are not obstructed.

WINDOWS. Keep glass as clear of condensation as you can. Wipe away moisture that has formed using a soft cloth. Leave open any 'trickle' vents in double glazed units.

HEATING. Provide a reasonable level of heating (no less than 10C in an unused area, or 16 c if in use); cold rooms are susceptible to condensation. Remember the best way to heat a room and avoid condensation is to maintain a low level of warmth through the day rather than turn the heating off while you are out and put it on at high level when you return back home.