

# factsheet

Housing and Health

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## DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION

### What is **CONDENSATION**?

Moisture is always in the air, even when you can't see it. If the air gets colder, it can't hold all of the moisture and tiny drops of water appear on cold surfaces. You will have noticed it when you can see your breath on a cold day or if your mirror mists over in the bathroom. It occurs normally during cold weather and unlike other forms of dampness, it does not leave a tidemark. Look for it in corners, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It often forms on north facing walls.

### Is this the cause of Dampness in my home?

Condensation is not the only cause of damp. It can also come from:

- Leaking, waste or overflow pipes
- Damaged roof tiles or slates,
- Blocked gutters
- Rising damp - due to an absent or ineffective damp proof course.

These causes of damp will often leave a 'tidemark' or have a defined edge.

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**DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION****How to avoid Condensation**

There are three main steps that can be used to help reduce condensation in your home:

**1. Produce less moisture.**

- Use lids on pans and do not leave the kettle boiling.
- Avoid using paraffin and portable flueless bottle gas heater - as they put excess moisture into the air.
- If you have to dry washing inside, then dry it in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or an extractor fan on.
- Vent tumble dryers to the outside air, unless they are the self condensing type. You can purchase DIY vent kits for this.

**2. Ventilate to remove moisture.**

- Keep a small window ajar, ventilator open or a fan on when someone is in a room.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening windows wider, or use a heat recovery humidity controlled fan (they will come on automatically when the air is humid while retaining the heat in the room).
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors, even if there is an extractor fan. This will prevent excess moisture reaching other rooms – particularly bedrooms, which tend to be colder and more likely to get condensation.
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes – avoid over filling them as this will stop the air circulating. Cut a ventilation slot in the back of each shelf or use slatted shelves. Breather holes can be cut into doors and in the back of wardrobes. Try to position furniture such as wardrobes on internal walls.



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- If windows are replaced, make sure that they have trickle ventilators incorporated.

### 3. Insulate, draught proof and heat your home.

- Insulate your loft. Remember to draught proof the loft hatch but be careful not to block ventilating openings around the eaves.
- Consider cavity wall insulation – you may need a building inspector to check your property first as building regulation approval can be required.
- Think about secondary and double glazing of windows to reduce heat loss and draughts. You must ensure that there is still some ventilation.
- During cold weather, make sure there is some low level heating on all day, even when the home is not occupied.

### Be Careful!

- Do not block permanent ventilators.
- Do not completely block chimneys. Instead leave a hole about two bricks in size and fit a louvered grille over it.
- Do not draughtproof rooms where there is condensation or mould.
- Do not draughtproof a room where there is a cooker or a fuel burning heater – e.g. a gas fire.
- Do not draughtproof windows in the kitchen or bathroom.

### What if I have Mould?

Firstly, treat or remove any mould you may have in your home, and then deal with the basic problem of condensation. If this is done, mould should not reappear. To kill and remove mould, wipe down



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the affected surfaces with fungicidal wash which carries a Health and Safety executive approval number. Follow all the instructions. Dry clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets. Disturbing mould by vacuuming it can increase the risk of respiratory problems. You can also purchase fungicidal paint to help prevent mould re-occurring.

If you have mould that is severe and you feel that it is affecting your health, please contact the Private Housing Section on the numbers given below.

**If you require more information please contact:**

Private Housing Section – Environmental Health  
Charnwood Borough Council, Southfields, Southfield Road,  
Loughborough, LE11 2TX

Tel: 01509 634651

Fax: 01509 262076

DX: 19628 Loughborough

Minicom: 01509 215996

E-Mail: [private.housing@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:private.housing@charnwood.gov.uk)

This information is available in different formats. To access these please phone (01509) 634560.

এ তথ্যাদি অন্যান্য মাধ্যমে পাওয়া যায়। এসব পেতে হলে দয়াকরে (01509) 634560 এ নাম্বারে টেলিফোন করুন।

這資料具不同的格式，請致電 (01509) 634560 索取。

આ માહિતી જુદી જુદી પદ્ધતિઓમાં ઉપલબ્ધ છે. તે મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો (01509) 634560.

यह जानकारी अलग-अलग प्रारूपों में मिल सकती है। इनको पाने के लिये कृपया यह नंबर डायल कीजिये (01509) 634560.

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