

# Condensation and Mould Advice



Argyll Community Housing Association



0800 028 2755



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**This leaflet contains important information on how to reduce problems in your home caused by condensation and mould.**

## What is condensation?

There is always some moisture in the air. If the air gets cold, it can't hold all of this moisture and appears as droplets of water on cold surfaces such as windows and walls. This is condensation.

Condensation can be reduced by:

- Producing less moisture in your home
- Stopping moisture spreading around your home
- Keeping your home ventilated
- Keeping your home warm



This leaflet informs you how to reduce condensation, how to get rid of mould and stop it from growing back again.

## What causes condensation?

The average household produces about 24 pints of moisture every day. Moisture is held in the air and must be allowed out of your home, otherwise condensation will form.

Two people active for one day		3 Pints
Cooking and Boiling a Kettle		6 Pints
Having a bath or a shower		4 Pints
Washing Clothes		1 Pint
Drying Clothes		9 Pints
Using a Calor Gas Heater		3 Pints
<b>Total amount of moisture produced in your home in one day</b>		<b>26 Pints</b>

Every home is subject to condensation at some time and it is quite normal to find your bedroom windows misted after a cold night. You may notice condensation on other cold surfaces such as pipes, or your toilet cistern. Condensation is usually more apparent during colder weather. It is a tenant's responsibility to wipe down these areas on a regular basis to prevent excessive moisture accumulating.



## When is condensation a problem?

In more serious cases, condensation can cause black or green mould to form on walls and other surfaces. This can cause damage to furnishings, clothes and decoration and if left will develop in to a more serious problem. Argyll Community Housing Association will not pay for mould damage to your personal possessions caused by condensation.

Mould is often found in cooler rooms such as bedrooms, bathrooms and hallways. It is usually found on window frames, outside walls, in cupboards and wardrobes or behind furniture where air flow is restricted.

This mould growth can be caused by condensation from normal day to day activities and isn't necessarily associated to building repairs.



# How can I get rid of mould?

1. As soon as you start to see mould growth you need to clean it away. This is your responsibility.

2. Wear rubber gloves and wipe the mould off the area using a cloth and anti-mould remover - one which carries a Health and Safety Executive approved number. These are available in supermarkets and DIY stores and should become part of your regular cleaning routine.

3. Mould can be washed out of fabrics but may leave a stain. Mildewed clothes should be dry cleaned.

4. Avoid vacuuming/sweeping affected carpets - shampoo instead.

5. If you redecorate, use a good quality anti-mould paint or fungicidal wall paper paste. If you use standard products, then mould is likely to come back.



## Other causes of moisture

Mould is frequently caused by condensation but it can also be caused by:

- Leaks e.g. windows, roofs or guttering
- Penetrating moisture through walls
- Rising damp – although this is very rare

If you suspect one of these, please call 0800 028 2755 and we will arrange for a repairs inspector to visit.

# How can I reduce condensation and stop mould from growing back?

To stop mould from growing back again, it is very important that you reduce the amount of condensation in your home. There are four main ways to deal with condensation; to deal with the problem effectively you will need to do all four:

1. Produce less moisture in your home
2. Stop moisture spreading around your home
3. Keep your home ventilated
4. Keep your home warm

## 1, Produce less moisture in your home:

- Use lids on pans and turn the heat down once the contents are boiling
- Hang washing outside whenever you can
- If you use a tumble dryer make sure it is vented to the outside
- If you dry clothes inside, dry in a room with the window ajar and the door closed
- Reduce steam when running the bath by running cold water first and then topping up with warm.
- Do not use bottled gas or paraffin heaters in your home; these produce a lot of water vapour when the fuel is burned.



## 2, Stop moisture from spreading:

- Keep the internal bathroom and kitchen doors shut and these rooms well ventilated during and after bathing and cooking
- Wipe down surface where moisture settles, such as windows and mirrors.

### 3. Keep your home ventilated

- Each morning, 'air' the affected rooms by opening the windows for a little while and wiping down any wet windows and sills
- Use extractor fans/hoods in bathrooms and kitchens where they are fitted
- Leave bathroom and kitchen windows open slightly for 20 minutes once you have finished cooking, showering or bathing. If your windows have trickle vents fitted leave these open as this will provide a steady flow of fresh air
- Remember to shut your windows before you go out
- Where possible leave an air gap between the back of any furniture and the wall it is against.

### 4. Keep your home warm

- Condensation can be worse in a cold home. This is because cold air cannot hold as much moisture as warm air. Keeping your home warm can really help to reduce condensation
- Condensation and mould often form in rooms that are unused or under heated. Turn the radiators and heaters down in these rooms to save energy, but don't turn them off completely



### Important things to remember



- Do not block ventilators or extractor fans
- Avoid blocking chimney openings
- Avoid putting furniture against cold external walls. Mould may grow on the wall or furniture where air cannot circulate
- Clean condensation and mould away when you see it forming

# Top tips to save money on your heating bill

- Set your thermostat to 18°C - 21°C. Turning your thermostat down by 1°C (but no lower than 18°C) could save £60 a year
- Use your heating programmer to set your heating to come on half an hour before you get out of bed / come home and turn off half an hour before you go to bed / leave the house.
- Use the thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) to ensure that different rooms are set to the right temperature, rather than having them all set to maximum
- Keep doors and windows closed when the heating is on
- Close curtains and blinds at dusk, make sure they do not hang in front of radiators



## Make sure you are not paying over the odds for your gas and electricity.

Contact ALIENERGY on free phone 0800 0014 706.

ALIENERGY provide affordable warmth support as part of the Council's new Money Skills Argyll project? They can help you take control of your energy bills and feel warmer at home. They will check you are with the best provider and on the best tariff.

They will also compare all energy suppliers simply and quickly to make sure you are getting the best price for your gas and electricity. It's free, easy and can save you money!

**ALIENERGY**  
Argyll, Lomond & the Islands Energy Agency

# Reducing condensation checklist

## Cooking:

- Extractor fan on
- Lids on saucepans
- Kitchen window open
- Kitchen door shut

## General:

- Open window trickle vents
- Open windows in the morning if there is condensation, leaving them open as long as possible
- Wipe condensation off windows in the morning
- Heating on for at least several hours a day and if possible keep background heat on all day
- Furniture not pushed up against external walls

- Black mould cleaned as soon as it appears
- Lid on fish tanks

## Bathing:

- Extractor fan on
- Bathroom window open
- Bathroom door shut

## Clothes washing / drying:

- Tumble dryer-vented outside
- Clothes hung up outside

## If this is not possible...

- Clothes hung on a dryer in the bathroom with the window open and door shut
- Clothes not hung on radiators

If you require more advice on how to reduce condensation in your home or you think you have a leak, please contact us on our dedicated free phone number **0800 028 2755** and ask for an appointment with one of the repairs team members.

Alternatively you could report your concerns through our website at [www.acha.co.uk](http://www.acha.co.uk) or via email to [enquiries@acha.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@acha.co.uk)