

A GUIDE TO REDUCING CONDENSATION, DAMP AND MOULD IN YOUR HOME



SHETLAND
ISLANDS COUNCIL



About damp, mould and condensation

WHAT IS DAMP AND WHAT CAUSES IT?

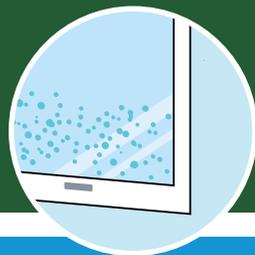
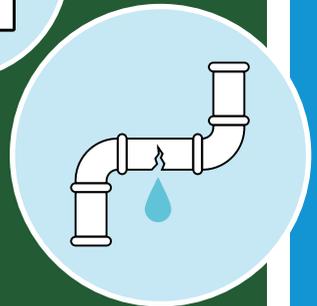
Damp is caused by too much moisture in a room. There is always moisture in the air, but normally you cannot see it. When there is too much it can cause damp and mould to form and spread. This can be a problem in homes for a variety of reasons.

If you notice damp, mould or water marks in your home it may be caused by an issue with the building, such as a leaking pipe or roof, or damaged guttering.

Over time, it can affect your health, so it's important to treat it and stop it spreading. If you spot signs of it in your home, it's important to act quickly.

MAIN CAUSES OF DAMP

- Leaking pipes and roofs.
- Rainwater getting into your home.
- Damaged or blocked drains and guttering.
- Rising damp.
- Damaged outside walls.
- Condensation.
- Poorly installed decking or garden items against walls.





LETTING YOUR HOME BREATHE

When moisture in the air comes into contact with cold surfaces, such as windows and walls, it can cause condensation. Without good airflow in all rooms, moisture can build up.

This is completely normal and most likely to happen in colder rooms. However, if the moisture builds up and is not able to escape the room, then it can become a major problem.

CAUSES OF CONDENSATION

- Not enough ventilation so moist air cannot escape.
- Not enough heating.
- Producing a lot of moisture, eg drying clothes inside, steam in kitchens and bathrooms.
- The more people and pets in your home, the higher the levels of moisture that needs to be removed from the air. A large dog can give off even more water vapour than the average adult. A family can produce between 10-20 litres of water per day, just by their normal daily activities.

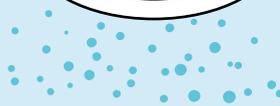
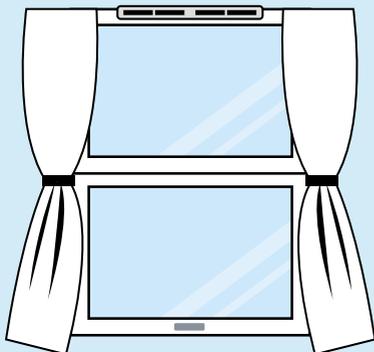
WHEN IS CONDENSATION A PROBLEM?

- When it builds up on a surface it can cause damp to form and mould to grow.
- The most common places for it to happen are on walls (especially in corners and behind furniture), ceilings, window frames and sills.
- It can also affect clothes, curtains, bedding, wardrobes and furniture and if it's left untreated, it can cause severe damp, which could be harmful to you and your family's health.

TOP TIPS

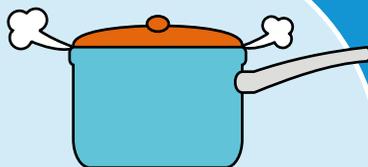
USE WINDOW VENTS

They allow moisture to escape without making the room cold.



USE EXTRACTOR FANS

If you have one in your kitchen or bathroom use it when cooking, bathing or doing laundry.

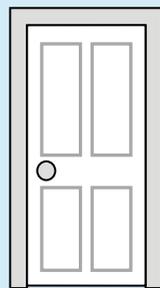
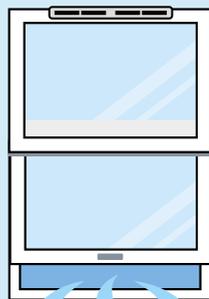


COVER PANS WITH LIDS WHEN COOKING

This prevents the steam escaping.

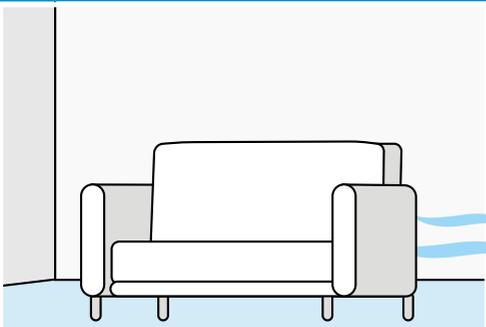
AVOID DRYING CLOTHES ON HEATERS

Dry them outside if you can, put on a drying rack, or in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or the fan on.



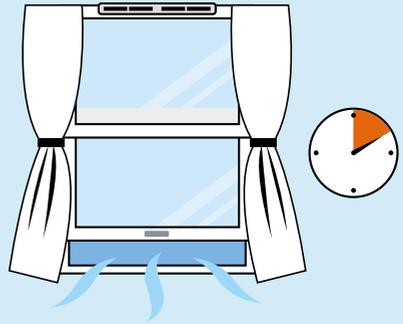
OPEN WINDOWS AND SHUT THE DOORS

in rooms where you are cooking, bathing or drying clothes (dry clothes outside if you can).



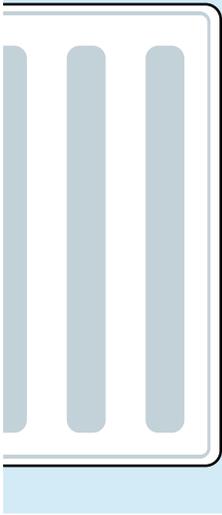
LEAVE GAPS

between furniture and the walls so air can circulate, particularly on external walls.

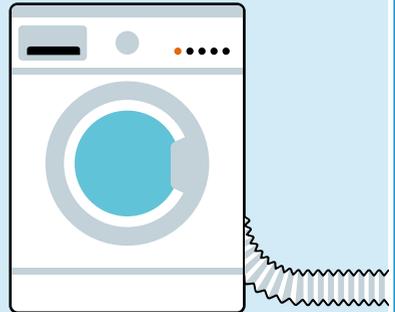
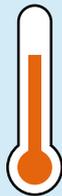


AIR ROOMS BY OPENING WINDOWS

aim for at least 15 minutes a day.



HEAT ROOMS ABOVE 15C IF YOU CAN



ENSURE YOUR TUMBLE DRYER IS CORRECTLY VENTED TO THE OUTSIDE

unless self condensing type.

AIR ROOMS, CUPBOARDS AND WARDROBES REGULARLY

Avoid putting too much in cupboards and wardrobes as it stops air circulating.



Extractor fans



If you have an extractor fan, it's really important that you use it properly. They are very cheap to run (typically less than 1p an hour).

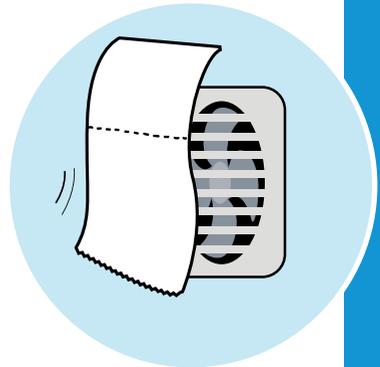
When bathing or cooking, switch on the fan as soon as you start (some start automatically). Then close the door behind you. The fan will draw moisture from the room.

Some fans are designed to be constantly running or remain on until the humidity has reduced and should not be disconnected.

CHECK IT

If you have an extractor fan in your kitchen or bathroom do this quick test to check it's working properly.

1. Turn the fan on.
2. Place a sheet of toilet paper on the front of the fan.
3. If the paper sticks to the front of the fan when you remove your hand the fan is working, if the paper falls to the floor, then it's not working effectively.
4. If it's not working, get in touch and we'll fix it.



WHAT ELSE CAN HELP

If there is condensation or dampness in your home, having a suitably sized dehumidifier will help.

Wipe down surfaces affected by condensation regularly, to prevent black spot mould growth.

PREVENT EXTRA MOISTURE BY AVOIDING THESE THINGS

It can sometimes be hard to keep our homes warm and we can make damp and mould issues worse when trying to fix heat and air flow problems.

Avoid

- ✗ Sealing up rooms that already have a condensation or mould problem.
- ✗ Adding extra sealant to windows in kitchens and bathrooms without small vents or extractor fans.
- ✗ Blocking up air bricks in walls or little vents in windows. These help your home breathe.

Did you know?

Everyday activities create moisture inside homes. Here are some examples of how much moisture could be produced in **one day**.

Pints of condensation generated by household activities



HOW WE CAN HELP

Tell us if you spot damp or mould or if something needs fixed in your home such as fans, windows, leaking pipes and heating not working.

When you tell us there's damp or mould in your home we will

- ✓ provide you with advice to help the situation
- ✓ visit your property, assess the situation and consider options. We may carry out a damp survey in your home if it is needed
- ✓ keep you updated on what happens next
- ✓ organise any repairs, including fixing emergency issues like leaks
- ✓ ask you for feedback on improvements.

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

The quickest and easiest way to report damp for SIC Housing properties is by contacting our Repairs Service on **01595 744399** or **housingrepairs@shetland.gov.uk**

KEEPING COSTS DOWN

We understand that the cost of living is rising and this can affect the way you heat and ventilate your home.

The Citizen's Advice Bureau provides advice and support on how to reduce your bills visit **www.shetlandcab.org.uk** or call **01595 694696**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Further details about damp and mould can be found on our website **www.shetland.gov.uk/tenant-information/household-advice/3** or by scanning the QR code

