

## **CONDENSATION AND CONDENSATION MOULD**

### **What is condensation?**

Condensation affects all homes in varying degrees at some time or another. Condensation happens when moist air comes into contact with a surface which is at a lower temperature; surfaces like a window, ceramic tiling or an external wall and water droplets form.

When this happens on a window the glass mists up and drops of water run down the window. When it happens on a wall the wall soaks up the moisture and becomes damp. Mould could then grow on the damp areas. Condensation mould is most commonly seen in patches of small black markings.

### **Where does it come from?**

Moisture is produced by several different activities in the home:

- Your body produces moisture all the time, when you breath and perspire. Two adults sleeping in an unventilated room for 8 hours can produce up to 1.5 pints of water vapour.
- Some house hold activities also produce moisture in the air; bathing, showering, cooking and washing the dishes.
- Drying clothes indoors especially on radiators or using unvented tumble dryers.
- Bottled gas or paraffin heaters produce large amounts of moisture

### **Where it can happen.**

Condensation happens most on the cool parts of walls, particularly on outside walls where there is not much air movement. It often appears as a dark patch in corners near the skirting and ceiling. The side walls of windows are also often affected.

Areas with poor ventilation can be prone to condensation. This could be behind furniture, particularly wardrobes and beds if they have been placed against outside walls.

Moisture is also commonly found in bathrooms and kitchens and can be easily seen on tiles. To prevent mould, open the window after bathing, showering or cooking and wipe the tiles down. In internal bathrooms and kitchens with no windows ensure a fan is installed, used and on a timer to allow it to run for 20 minutes after you have finished in the area.

### **How to remove mould.**

Mould can be easily removed. You can normally wipe it off with a disposable cloth using a household cleaner or specialist anti-mould cleaning product. These products must be used in accordance with the manufactures written instructions. Wipe over the areas every few days to stop the mould growing back. This should become part of your regular cleaning routine.

**Preventing condensation:**

- Good and sufficient ventilation throughout the property is key.
  - Keep a window open when drying clothes indoors.
  - Don't dry clothes over warm radiators.
  - Keep the kitchen door closed when cooking.
  - Keep lids on pots and pans when cooking.
  - Keep the bathroom door closed when running a bath and bathing or showering.
  - Don't over fill cupboards and wardrobes, make sure air can circulate.
  - If you have an extractor fan in the kitchen and bathroom make sure you use it.
  - Don't keep furniture and beds hard against walls, make sure air can circulate.
  - Keep your heating on throughout the day in cold weather.
  - Avoid using flueless gas or paraffin heaters as they produce a lot of moisture.
  - Adequately heat and ventilate rooms at risk.
  - When using a tumble dryer make sure it has suitable ventilation to an external area of the property.
  - Keep trickle vents open on windows.
  - Alternatively a dehumidifier can be installed in rooms with particular problems.
- These machines are available in many DIY stores.