

Damp and Condensation

What is damp?

This is where rain water is coming into your home or there is a leak. For example you can get damp because of leaking pipes, rain seeping through the roof or because of a blocked gutter. Damp shows in ceilings or walls as a damp patch and often leaves a tide mark. Sometimes it is worse when it is raining.

If you have water dripping off your light bulbs then there is a leak in the room above. This can be dangerous because water has got into the electrics. **Call the Tamar Repair Service immediately.**

You can also get rising damp where there is a faulty damp proof course or in old houses because there is no damp proof course. Rising damp shows by leaving a wavy line along the bottom of walls, often rising in the corners. Decoration is often damaged and wallpaper may peel.

If you think you have damp or rising damp, contact the office immediately and we will arrange for an inspection.

What is Condensation?

There is always some moisture in the air, even if you can't see it. The warmer the air the more moisture it can contain. If the air gets colder, it can't always hold all the moisture and some of it forms tiny droplets on anything cold. This is called condensation.

You will notice condensation when you breathe out on a cold day or when the mirror mists over when you have a bath.

In your home you will notice condensation on the inside of your windows on a cold day.

Condensation can be dealt with by taking some simple precautions to reduce the moisture in the air or by ventilation.

How can I tell if I have condensation?

One of the best indicators of condensation is that water will be streaming down windows. If there is any mould (usually black but it can be any colour) on the walls or windows than this is almost always condensation. You are most likely to get condensation in the kitchen and bathroom, but also in bedrooms and to a lesser extent in other rooms. Also condensation appears in the corners of rooms, along edges, around windows, behind furniture or in cupboards, often a long way from where the moisture is produced.



How can I avoid condensation?

Produce less moisture in the air. There are some day to day activities which produce a lot of moisture.

Cooking – reduce the amount of moisture in the air by covering your sauce pans, don't leave your kettle boiling and open a window when you are cooking.

Baths and showers – Open a window or put an extractor fan on while you are in the bath or shower. Keep the window open and open the door after you finish, letting some of the moisture out. Don't disconnect the extractor fan.

Drying clothes – If you can, hang your washing outside to dry. If you have a tumble drier, make sure it is vented outside. If you have to dry clothes inside, try to dry them in the bathroom with the window open or extractor fan on.

Increasing the ventilation to your home can reduce condensation.

Windows – Keep a small window open, especially when you are cooking, drying clothes or washing, as this lets out the moisture. But do remember the security risk of leaving windows open when no one is home. If your windows have trickle vents use them to let a small amount of air through.

Doors – Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when you are using them and keep bedroom doors closed when no one is in them. This stops the moisture travelling round your home and finding somewhere cold.

Furniture – Leave a space between your furniture and the wall, so that the air can circulate. Where possible put your furniture on internal walls rather than against outside walls.

Cupboards – If you have condensation in your cupboards, leave the doors ajar and do not fill them too full.

Heating is also important.

Heating – In cold weather the best way to avoid condensation is to keep a low background heat on all day, even when no one is at home. This is especially true in flats as the bedrooms are on the same level as the kitchen and bathroom.

Paraffin and bottle gas heaters – Don't use this type of heater as they produce a lot of moisture in the air. For every pint of gas used a pint of water is put into the air.

Insulation - Tamar is committed to providing homes that are energy efficient. As a result we have carried out a lot of insulation works. This helps to avoid condensation.

Draught proofing – It is important that you do not block air bricks or permanent vents, do not switch off extractor fans, do not completely block chimneys and do not draught proof rooms where there is condensation or mould.

What can I do if I have mould?

To kill and remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash. You can get the wash from any good DIY store. Always follow the instructions on the packet. Dry clean any mildewed clothes and shampoo any carpets or soft furnishings.

After removing the mould, redecorate with a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould growth. In severe case you may need to treat and redecorate more than once.

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