

## A guide to condensation

**This information sheet gives important information about condensation, including what causes it and how you can reduce the amount that occurs in your home.**

### What causes condensation?

Condensation occurs when the warm air in a room comes into contact with a cold surface, such as a window, mirror or wall, and turns into water droplets.

This happens more in rooms where there is a lot of moisture, such as bathrooms and kitchens, and in rooms where there are a lot of people.

In the UK, condensation problems occur more in the winter, when warmed air comes into contact with cold windows and walls, or unheated parts of the home.

### Where does moisture in the air come from?

It can come from normal day-to-day activities. For example, a home with five people living in it can produce up to 10 litres of water in the air, from:

- breathing (asleep) 0.3 litres

- breathing (awake) 0.85 litres
- cooking 3 litres
- personal washing 1 litre
- washing and drying clothes 5.5 litres.

Heating can also produce a lot of moisture, especially paraffin and bottled gas heaters. Every litre of paraffin burnt produces one litre of moisture.

### Why is ventilating your home important?

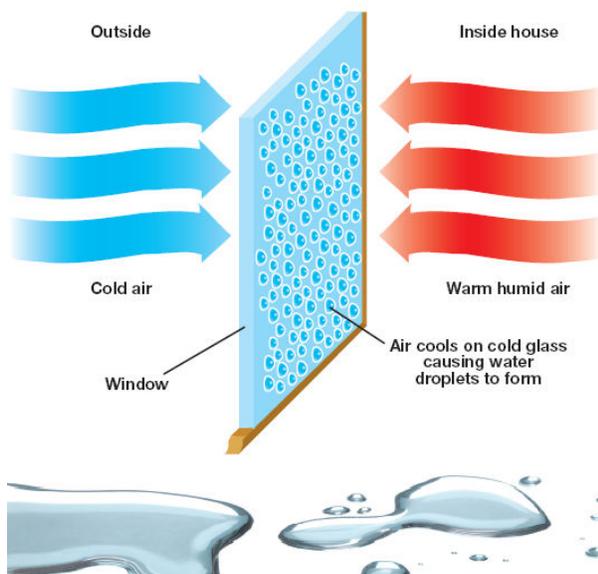
Most modern homes have fitted carpets, double glazing, draught excluders and closed fireplaces, which all prevent air circulating around the home. This means that any warm, moist air gets trapped inside the building. When this air comes into contact with colder parts of the house, such as an unheated room, or at night when the temperature drops, the moisture turns into condensation.

As a result, you may see condensation in your home as water droplets on windows and mirrors, but you may also see mould growth on walls or in corners of your home, behind furniture or in cupboards where the air does not circulate.

### Ways of reducing condensation in your home:

These hints will help reduce moisture in your home and prevent condensation building up:

- After a bath or shower, try to ventilate the room to the outside, not to the rest of the house – just opening a window (and closing the door) will help
- Dry clothes out of doors or in



a cool area of your home. Your clothes will take longer to dry, but less moisture will build up

- When drying clothes indoors, ventilate the room by opening a window
- When people come in with wet coats, hang the coats outside the living area to dry
- Increase ventilation in your home by installing extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom. Alternatively, open a window when cooking food or having a shower or bath
- Consider changing the fuel you use. Electricity is the driest, paraffin probably the wettest
- Consider using a dehumidifier. They don't cost a lot and can remove a surprising amount of water from the air

If after following these guidelines you are still getting a build-up of condensation in your home, contact us and we may be able to find an answer to the problem.