

Innisfree

CONDENSATION, DAMP, AND MOULD

A guide to preventing and
dealing with household mould



Condensation, damp, and mould

In most cases, the cause of mould in homes is simple to prevent or repair. Most times mould is due to excess moisture in the air, and not through a structural fault or repair issue.

What is damp?

There are two types of damp – external and internal.

External damp can result in wet patches on your walls or the ceiling. This is often caused by issues with the roof, gutter, cladding or your windows.

Innisfree is responsible for carrying out repairs to resolve external damp, so please let us know if you have any concerns so we can take a look and arrange a repair.

Internal damp is most often caused by condensation; this can be harder to prevent. Condensation can cause damp on your walls, in the corners of rooms, and on the ceiling.

There is always some moisture in the air, even if you can't see it. Condensation forms when water vapour inside your home is unable to escape. The amount of water vapour builds up in the air and, when it can hold no more, it liquifies on a colder surface (usually your windows). This starts off looking like a mist on the windows but, if allowed to continue, it will eventually form droplets of water. This is condensation.

In both cases, external and internal damp can lead to mould. Mould can be easy to remove, but unless the cause of the damp is resolved at the source you may find that the mould returns.



External damp



Internal damp



Where condensation is the cause of mould, the best way to cure it is by following the advice in this leaflet, and giving us a call on 020 7625 1818 - option 2

Recognising different types of damp

Rising damp, leaks from pipes or structural damp tend to leave a line or mark on the wall or ceiling and rising damp becomes more obvious in wet weather.



Damp caused by a fault with your home

Examples of problems that may cause damp and mould where a repair would help are:

- a leaking roof
- blocked gutters
- leaking pipe-work
- defective brickwork or rendering
- defective damp proof course
- defects around window frames

To see if a repair is needed in your home, see the advice on page 7.

What causes condensation?

There are four main factors that cause condensation:

- excess moisture being produced in the home
- ventilation in the property
- cold surfaces
- the temperature of your home

Everyday activity	Amount of added moisture
Two people at home	3 pints
A bath or shower	2 pints
Drying clothes indoors	9 pints
Cooking and use of a kettle	6 pints
Washing dishes	2 pints
Total moisture added in one day	22 pints or 12.5 litres

Treating the mould

If you deal with the basic problems of condensation, the mould should not reappear.

To treat and remove the mould, we may wipe down the walls and door frames with a fungicidal wash - this is called a Mould Wash. If you feel able to do this yourself, remember to follow the manufacturer’s instructions. Do not use bleach as this is water based and does not actually remove the



mould.
Do not try to remove the mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning as this can increase the risk of respiratory problems.



Reducing the condensation

Heating and insulation

If the home is kept warm most of the time, it can reduce the amount of excess moisture in the air. Try to keep a steady low level of heating throughout the day rather than heating your home from cold each time. Use the thermostats or radiator valves to control your heating – this should also help to reduce your heating bills.

If you are having trouble heating your home, please let us know.

Ventilation and windows

Nobody enjoys a draught, but some ventilation in the home is essential. In winter, try to open the windows a little when they mist up.

If you have an extractor fan, remember to use it when cooking or having a bath/shower to stop the windows getting steamed up.

Kettles and pans

Don't allow kettles and pans to boil away any longer than is necessary, and always put the lid on the saucepan when cooking.

Doors

It's best to keep internal kitchen and bathroom doors closed when cooking, washing or bathing as water vapour will spread through the house.

With doors open, condensation is more likely to reach external walls and ceilings in cooler rooms, particularly bedrooms.



Reducing the condensation



Drying clothes

If you need to dry your washing at home it is best to do so by placing the washing on a clothes airer located in the kitchen or bathroom; shut the door, turn on the radiator and run the extractor fan (if there is one provided) or open the window a little. If you have a tumble dryer, this needs to be vented or for the hose to be directed outside.

Baths & showers

A helpful tip is to remember to put a small amount of cold water in the bath before you turn on the hot tap. Do not run your shower for longer than needed, and remember to use your extractor fan or open a window.

Condensation

Always remember to mop up any condensation or water as it forms.

Cupboards and wardrobes

Don't overfill cupboards and wardrobes. Try to make sure some air can circulate freely and leave a space at the back of the shelves.

Chimneys

Never block chimneys as it could be dangerous.



Is a repair needed?



Please check in and around your home to see if there is any evidence of:

- leaks from the roof, guttering, downpipes or soil and vent pipes
- blocked drains
- a leak coming from the flat above
- water penetration from around walls or doors
- leaks from sanitary ware (W.C, bath, basin)
- leak from the hot water cylinder
- leaks from under the sink or the washing machine
- leak from the stop cock or supply pipe work.

Reporting issues to Innisfree

You should report any concerns to our Maintenance Team on 020 7625 1818 (Option 2).

- we will ask you some questions about damp or mould in your home; we may ask you to take some photos.
- we will likely arrange for one of our contractors to visit your home and provide us with a report on their findings.
- we will share their findings with you and make an action plan to resolve the issues.



If you are unhappy with the way that we have handled or are handling your concerns for condensation, damp, and mould; you can raise a complaint by calling us on 020 7625 1818 or emailing us at complaints@innisfree.org.uk



www.innisfree.org.uk

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Email: housing@innisfree.org.uk

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