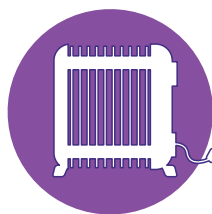


DAMP AND MOULD

Spotlight on damp and mould in your home



Hull
City Council

01482 300 300
hull.gov.uk

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt, is seen from the back, looking out of a large window. Her hands are resting on the window frame. The view outside is a blurred cityscape with greenery and buildings.

Spotlight on damp and mould in your home

Many of our daily activities such as cooking, washing, drying clothes indoors and even just breathing will create moisture in the home.

Sometimes it builds up as condensation which can cause windows to mist and lead to damp patches of black mould spores growing on walls, ceilings, window frames, furniture, curtains and clothes. This damp atmosphere is not only unpleasant and worrying, but it can also affect people's health, especially if they suffer with respiratory problems.

We want to reassure you that when you report problems with condensation, damp, and mould, we will work with you to establish the cause, provide advice on how to resolve the problem, carry out any work or improvements required to help, such as using fans, prevent

further problems and advise about any different things you can do day to day to help control recurrence so that you can enjoy living in your home.

This document has been produced to give you general advice and to help you to tackle damp, mould, or condensation in your home and to help you work with us to get rid of it.

Causes of mould growth in buildings

- high levels of moisture from normal day-to-day activities
- not enough ventilation
- insufficient heating
- moisture settling on cold surfaces, such as windows and worktops.



Top tips for avoiding condensation in your home

- try to make sure your home is heated adequately
- ventilate when you can. Open windows or use the trickle vents at the top of your window (where available) and use the extractor fans (where fitted) when cooking or having a bath or shower. Open windows to air your bedrooms. Close the bathroom door during and after bathing/showering to prevent the moisture going into other rooms
- when you dry clothes inside, the equivalent of nine pints of water is added to the air inside your home. If possible dry washing outside when the weather permits and if you are unable to do so help this moisture to escape by opening a window or by using extractor fans if fitted in your home
- when cooking, put lids on pans, use a cooker hood extractor if you have one fitted and open windows to help minimise airborne moisture by allowing steam to escape
- avoid if possible, having non-essential things in your home which produce moisture, for example, uncovered fish tanks
- wipe down surfaces where moisture settles, such as windows, mirrors, ceramic tiles or cold external walls
- leave a clear gap of at least a centimetre between furniture and walls and don't overfill your drawers with clothes to enable air to circulate and prevent mould growth on furniture and household items
- some house plants with hairy or waxy leaves and thick stems. such as aloes, palms, and yuccas, can help reduce humidity by catching and keeping water from the air.

How to deal with mould already in your home

- don't brush or use a vacuum cleaner to try and get rid of damp and mould. Mould is a living organism and when disturbed may potentially cause breathing problems. You may need professional help from our repairs team to get rid of it
- if you attempt to get rid of it yourself, protect yourself by wearing a protective mask (not a paper disposable Covid-19 mask) covering your nose and mouth, wearing rubber gloves and goggles
- you can kill mould by wiping down affected areas with a fungicidal wash – one which carries a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) approved number (e.g. Registered with HSE under "Control of Pesticides Regulations; 1986" HSE 10400), making sure you follow the manufacturer's instructions. Do not use bleach or washing up liquid
- mildewed clothes should be dry cleaned or washed on as high temperature possible for the type of material. If you can, dry them outside because sunlight is good for killing mildew. Shampoo any affected carpets
- after treatment, do what you can to reduce condensation to restrict new mould growth
- also, after the damp has been treated, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring (note: the fungicidal paint will not be effective if covered with ordinary paints or wallpaper)
- keep windows and doors closed when the heating is on, then when it's off open the trickle vents on the windows or open windows slightly or for a period of time to prevent condensation and mould forming
- close curtains and blinds when it gets dark to keep in the heat
- ensure you open curtains during the day to allow heat to enter individual rooms naturally as a result of the sun





What can we do to help...

If you have reported a damp/mould/condensation related problem or repair, there are number of ways we may be able to help:

- we can increase the ventilation in your home by fitting or increasing the extractor fans or by installing other mechanical ventilation systems to help moisture escape
- we may look at specialist mould treatment work in severe cases
- we can arrange for your home's damp proof membrane (DPC) to be checked and repaired if required or check if mould is

present due to plaster touching the floor and making it cold or allowing moisture to travel through it.

- if you think you have a leak to your home either from a water pipe or water is getting into your home from the outside, we can check this and carry out repairs as required.
- we can fit additional insulation where this will help and if it is possible for us to do so
- we can fit a device to monitor the levels of moisture and record the times where moisture is high and low in your home, indicating any patterns, which will allow us to determine how best to deal with it.

Penetrating damp and rising damp are different

Penetrating and rising damp is different to condensation dampness. It usually occurs when a structural fault in the buildings lets water in from outside, resulting in a wet patch (without any mould growth). If there is a problem with the home's damp

proof course you might get rising damp, which creates a 'tide mark' on the walls. This does not necessarily mean that you will not also have condensation mould which may be caused or made worse by the water getting into your home.

If you think you have either rising damp or penetrating damp in your home, contact our repairs service on: (01482) 300 300.





Worried about heating your home?

We know that many people are worried about heating their homes and staying warm. However, making sure your home is warm will help to reduce the risk of damp and mould.

Please don't be scared to ask for help - we have lots of helpful information. Our Warm Homes Team provide an impartial fuel poverty advice service to help you reduce costs of keeping warm and well at home. To make a referral for yourself please contact **WarmHomesTeam@hullcc.gov.uk**.

Top tips to help reduce the risk of condensation and cut the cost of keeping warm:

- set radiator valves to the right temperature for individual rooms rather than having them all at maximum heat. It's not advisable to turn any of them off, just set them at the minimum. It's better to have a continual low heat rather than shorter blasts of high heat
- Keep windows and doors closed when the heating is on.



How can you report a concern?

The easiest way to report a damp/mould/condensation problem is via the hull.gov.uk website. More guidance on damp/mould/condensation can be accessed by scanning the QR code below.



For emergency repairs

(where something needs fixing urgently),

call: 01482 300 300. You can also report to a member of staff, including our contractors during a visit, whether routine or for any other reason, and they will raise a report on your behalf.

This document can be made available in alternative formats including large print, digital, audio and Braille as well as in different languages. Call 01482 300 300.



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