Condensation in Your Home

All homes produce some amounts of excess moisture and we are all familiar with condensation on windows and pools of water on window sills. In severe cases, if not managed, this can lead to damp patches on walls and mould growth spots. In homes, unsightly mould can form around window panes, corners of rooms and behind furniture. Condensation is the first sign that your home is producing excessive moisture or that moisture cannot escape through ventilation.

Moisture and mould build up is not only unsightly but can cause damage to clothing, furnishings, decorations and can aggravate certain health conditions. If you are experiencing dampness in your home, please notify NB Housing's Maintenance Team on 028 90 351131. A member of staff will visit your home and assess your property.

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How to Prevent and Manage
Condensation in Your Home

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Where Does The Moisture Come From?

All air contains some moisture. Modern appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines and tumble dryers all produce large amounts of moisture. An average family can produce around ten litres of moisture each day.

When Does Condensation Happen?

Condensation happens mainly in winter when there is too much moisture in the air. The moisture in the air will condense on cold surfaces. If excess moisture is allowed to build-up in the home, moist air will inevitably come into contact with a cold surface such as a window or external walls when the outside temperature falls. Beads of condensation can form, initially on windows and then spread elsewhere. The condensation can turn into damp and may result in mould spots growing.

How Does The Moisture Spread?

Moist air is never concentrated in one place for long, it will drift around the home. Moisture produced in one room, for example a kitchen or bathroom will circulate around the house, until it finds a cold place where it will condense and create areas of localised damp. This may be a cool bedroom or inside a wardrobe for example.

Condensation and damp can therefore occur in any room of the home. Usually these are the rooms that are least well heated, not necessarily the ones where the moisture was produced.

How To Reduce Condensation?

The 3 main ways to tackle condensation are to reduce the amount of moisture in the air, ventilate your home and keep your home warm.

Our homes are well insulated, usually with double glazing and draught proofing to prevent heat loss. These measures allow your home to retain heat throughout the winter months. If you have signs of condensation within your home then you should use your heating to regulate the temperature of the property.

It's important to ventilate your home, even for short periods of time, as this will let the moisture in the air escape from the home, instead of letting it build up inside. Always use extractor fans where fitted, never block air vents and ensure trickle vents on your windows are left open.

Reduce the amount of moisture within the home and if condensation does appear you should wipe it down to reduce dampness and the risk of mould growing.

Important Things To Remember

- The three main ways to tackle condensation are to reduce the amount of moisture in the air, ventilate your home and keep your home warm.
- If you can, do not dry your clothes indoors, each load of washing will contain 3-6 litres of water.
- If you can, keep lids on pots when cooking and open a window or use the extractor fan if provided.
- If you can, keep bathroom doors closed during and after bathing and showering. Open the window or use the fan if provided.
- If you can, ensure all rooms are adequately heated even if rarely used.
- Do not use stand-alone gas heaters as these appliances produce water.
- Ventilate properly. (Ventilation removes stale, moist air). If you can, please open several windows to allow a through draft for a short period during the day.
- In cold weather, opening windows for 5-10 minutes several times a day will remove moist air without allowing the fabric of the building to cool significantly. This method will conserve heat and reduce energy loss as most heat in a property is held within the building fabric (walls, floors etc.) and not the air itself.