

How to prevent damp and mould in your home

Identify the causes and take steps to maintain a dry and healthy living environment.

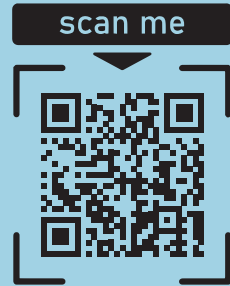


Tenant Voice

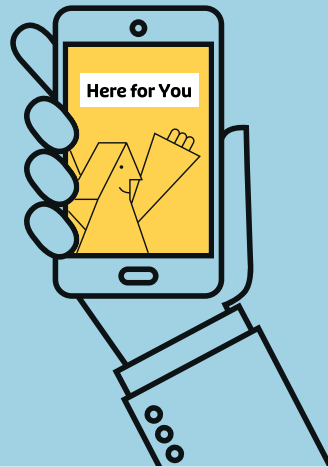


Together we're empowered and making a difference

If you live in a council owned house and you're worried about damp and mould in your home, please get in touch with our Repairs Team on 01942 489005 or report the issue online at www.wigan.gov.uk/HousingRepairs



The cost of living is at its highest level in a decade and with household energy bills being the largest expense you may need help with fuel and energy costs to keep your home warm. To learn more visit www.wigan.gov.uk/HereForYou to find out what support is available and how to access it.



What is condensation and how does it occur?

Condensation is the most common cause of dampness experienced by many householders. Condensation is caused by water vapour or moisture from inside your home meeting a colder surface. The resulting water drops (known as condensation) may then soak into paintwork, wallpaper and even wall plaster. In time the affected areas can then attract black spot mould that grows on the surface.

Condensation mainly occurs during the winter months and when there is a high level of moisture within the air. Poorly ventilated areas can also suffer from mould in areas such as, behind wardrobes and beds, or in the corner of rooms where furniture may be, especially when they are pushed up against the wall.

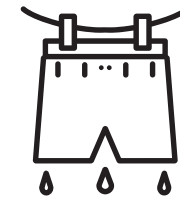
Moisture can be caused by normal every day activities carried out at home such as:



Cooking



Washing dishes



Drying clothes



Bathing

If left untreated, your home can become the perfect environment for mould to grow.

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What is mould and how does it occur?

Mould is a fungus which grows in homes when warm moist air settles on the coldest areas of the home, such as walls, windows, and ceilings. It appears as dark spots which begin to spread if left untreated. To remove the mould, specialist cleaning solutions can be used to treat mould.



What is damp and how does it occur?

Damp will appear as darker marks, lines or stains on your walls. It can also cause paint or wallpaper to blister and peel.

It occurs when water enters your property from the outside due to a damaged exterior, for example a leak from a roof or from an internal leak such as from a bath or washing machine that has been connected incorrectly.

Rising damp travels from the ground in an upwards direction. It can rise to 1 metre from the ground in severe cases. It usually only starts to form downstairs. Any signs of damp upstairs or above 1 metre from the ground is likely to be because of a leak from above.



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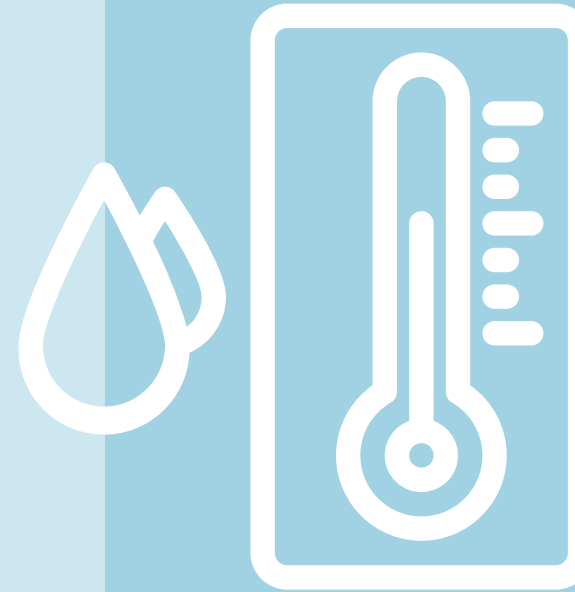
Extractor fans

Extractor fans are very important in the fight against Damp and mould conditions. Your home should have an extractor fan in the kitchen and bathroom. If you do not have an extractor fan, please contact our Repairs Team. It is highly recommended that these fans remain on to prevent condensation and mould. Extractor fans are designed to remove warm moist air from your home. It is important

that you don't turn these fans off. Wigan Council use low carbon output fans making it cheaper for you. When running constantly, these fans cost less than £2 a year which is £0.03 pence per week. They will help to remove steam before it cools and settles on colder surfaces. If this happens then the condensed air could form mould on your walls and ceilings.



The following all contribute towards the cause of damp and mould:



Cool surfaces

Falling temperatures

Lack of ventilation

Warm rising air

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What is Penetrating Damp and how does it occur?

Penetrating damp is usually found on external facing walls but can be found on chimney breast walls as seen on this image. This is when water is allowed to enter the property because of an unseen fault

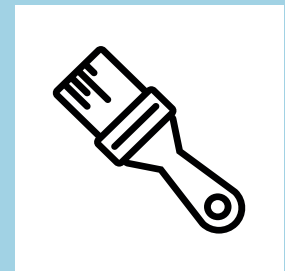
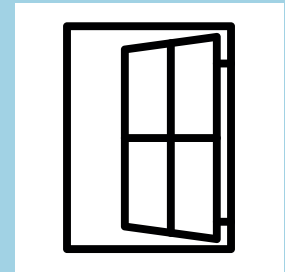
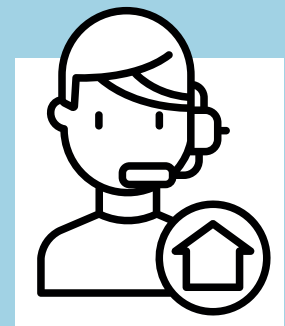
within the property. This fault needs to be identified and repaired as quickly as possible to prevent further internal damage. If you see anything that resembles this image, please contact our Repair Team.



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What happens next?

- After you report a damp or mould issue we may need to visit your home to identify the problem.
- A member from one of our Repairs Team will endeavour to keep you informed and update you on the actions we are taking and why.
- We may need to:
 - Increase ventilation within your home, and/or install a ventilation system to help remove moisture.
 - Carry out specialist mould treatment
 - Check the damp proof membrane and repair if needed.
- We will also contact you after we have carried out any repair or treatment to check the mould has not returned.



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How can I help to prevent condensation and mould?

The following handy hints and tips can help prevent condensation and mould within your home:

- Close the doors to rooms with high moisture: Keep the door closed to your bathroom and kitchen when bathing or cooking. This will help to prevent the moist air from entering the rest of your home. If the air escapes to the colder areas of your home, then mould could begin to form.
- Report any leaks you find immediately by calling 01942 489005.
- Keep your extractor fan running: It constantly monitors the air and helps to remove the moist air which creates condensation.
- Ventilate: If you can see steam, get it out. Extractor fans are no substitute for an open window. Striking the right balance between warmth and ventilation is important and can be very effective. By having windows in the locked open position, it may appear that you are losing some heat. What you are actually doing is allowing the warm moisture-laden air to escape. Dry air is cheaper the heat than moist air.
- Wipe down surfaces: If you see a build-up of condensation on your windows and hard surfaces, wiping away the condensation will help prevent mould from forming.
- Single use dehumidifiers: Are available from most supermarkets. They can help with low level condensation issues that you may find in bedrooms. They can also help in rooms that see little use and aren't heated as much as the rest of your home.
- Please do not block air vents: They are there to allow the house to breathe and essential in the circulation of air around your home.
- Dry clothes in well-ventilated areas: Outside is the best but if you do have to dry clothes inside make sure it is in a well-ventilated area, with the door/s closed. Remember drying clothes releases more moisture into the air.
- Heat your home: We understand you may be worried about the cost of heating your home. Making sure your home is warm enough will help reduce the risk of condensation related damp and mould. It is much more energy efficient to keep your home at a steady temperature, between 18 - 20 degrees Celsius. If your thermostat is faulty please contact Liberty Gas on 0330 333 5771.

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Our People

Here for You

Feeling the pressure of rising costs?
It's hard to know where to turn.
We're here to point you in the right direction.



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