

How To Recognise & Report Condensation, Damp & Mould



In this leaflet, SW9 is providing information on the causes surrounding condensation, damp and mould, in the hope of offering some guidance on how to manage occurrences.

We also wish to advise on how we deal with the reporting of condensation, damp and mould. Upon reporting an instance of damp or mould in your property, we will send a SW9 Officer to determine and examine the issue as soon as possible. We will then make sure that your repair is raised with the most suitable contractor, where applicable.

We are in the process of putting together a separate Damp and Mould Policy, which will help SW9 colleagues to further identify how to tackle cases of damp or mould in your home as quickly and effectively as possible.

We present the Housing Ombudsman's *Spotlight report on damp and mould* in the assurance of SW9's continuing efforts in making improvements wherever necessary; it can be accessed via the link shown here.

We hope that you find the content informative.



What is condensation?

Condensation occurs more prominently during the colder months and can be found in place around our home where the air is still, for example, behind furniture or in a corner. Issues surrounding condensation can be easily rectified if we recognise the signs.

If water is running down walls and windows, musty smells occur or the wallpaper is peeling, then your home may be suffering from the effects of condensation. Moisture is also generated during normal, everyday living, such as when we have a bath, or we boil a kettle.

Condensation is less likely to appear when your home is well-ventilated and is kept warm.



How to avoid condensation

There are several things that we can do to keep condensation at bay:

- Your washing machine and / or tumble dryer should be correctly vented
- Close the bathroom or kitchen door when using, to avoid extra moisture
- Try to dry clothes outside whenever possible
- If you must dry clothes inside, use a laundry maiden and keep the room ventilated. Please avoid drying clothes on a radiator as this releases moisture into the air
- When cooking, put lids onto your pots and pans to avoid steam escaping
- Keep your home's temperature to at least 18°C
- Use curtains, preferably lined, keeping them open during the day, closed in the evening
- Use a towel if you find condensation on your windows – please do not allow condensation to collect on the frames, as this may lead to rot.

Ventilation Versus Warmth

It is important to allow warm air to escape your home, as it is full of moisture. Cooler and drier air helps in keeping condensation at bay. Open windows slightly in rooms that you use on a regular basis.

It is advisable to ventilate for up to an hour at a time; do not to leave windows open all day.



What is damp?

Damp occurs when water finds its way into a property from the outside.

The causes for this could stem from:

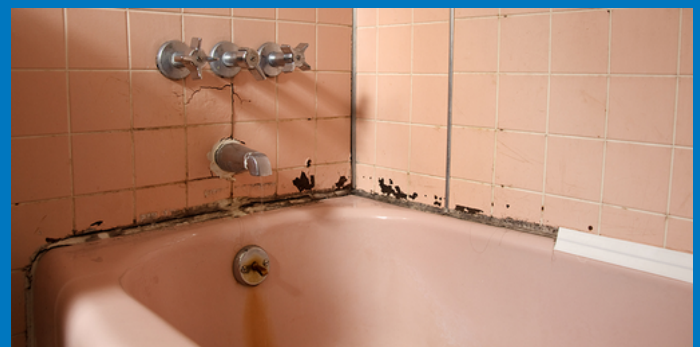
- Leaking gutters
- Gaps in doors or windows
- Poor brickwork
- Broken pipes

How to tackle damp issues

If you see damp patches on internal walls, penetrating damp may be happening. The more rain we have, patches could become larger. Cracks in gutters could also lead to further symptoms of penetrating damp.

If you have identified that there may be symptoms of damp in or around your home, this should be investigated as soon as possible as it may lead to other structural issues further down the line.

Please contact us if you are aware of anything approaching these scenarios; the issues will need to be tackled by a damp or other structural specialists.



What is mould?

A microscopic fungus that develops in damp places, mould spores are found everywhere. Thousands of these spores are released into the atmosphere. Signs include fuzzy black, green or white patches on walls, and a musty smell in the air. This is more dangerous in the home when temperatures drop.

As has been sadly proven, people who are living with mould are more likely to experience respiratory issues, including allergies, asthma, or more severe illnesses. Inhaling and / or touching mould spores can cause allergic reactions.

In homes, condensation is the leading cause of mould, most prevalent in those parts of the home such as bathrooms, kitchens and around windows, as previously mentioned. If the affected area is left untreated, it could become damp and create a condition where mould may develop.

Tips on preventing mould

- Wipe away signs of mould - antifungal or antibacterial sprays can be used. Always use a cloth and make sure the area is completely dry afterwards
- You may need to repeat this process to avoid further outbreaks
- Redecorate using a specialist fungicidal paint or fungicidal wallpaper paste.
- Ordinary paint / paste will not work.



In conclusion

As shown, there are several different things that can cause condensation, damp and mould in the home, so it is really important that we find out the root cause.

Information

For further information including a short video on condensation, please take a look at our website:

Condensation and your home

Call the SW9 dedicated Repairs Line, email SW9's Repairs Team, or complete the SW9 Repairs Form:

- 020 3007 3170
- repairs@sw9.org.uk
- [SW9 Online Repairs Form](#)

You can visit our office in person or contact us by post:

SW9 Community Housing
6 Stockwell Park Walk
London
SW9 0FG

- Monday – 9am – 5pm
- Tuesday – 10am – 5pm
- Wednesday – 9am – 5pm
- Thursday – 9am – 7pm
- Friday – 9am – 5pm

Further related advice and information can also be found at:

- [The Energy Saving Trust](#)
- [National Energy Action](#)
- [Energy Saving Tips: five ways to cut costs this winter](#) (BBC)
- [What is mould and how to get rid of it?](#) (AXA Insurance)
- [What is mould?](#) (Airtech Solutions)

