

Tenants Advice Booklet

Condensation & Damp



Ridgewater
Energy

Commissioned by:



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Disclaimers:

The websites printed in this booklet are not endorsed by Ridgewater Energy or BCP Council. Information has been collated from a range of sources, including, but not limited to: National Energy Action, Gov.UK.

Tips and advice stated in this booklet are suggestions and therefore may not be applicable to every home. Seek professional advice if you are unsure and always follow manufacturers guidelines when using any product.

Always obtain landlord permission, or determine what your landlords responsibilities are, before proceeding with any work.

Website links may be updated periodically, try searching the relevant words in Google to find the new website link.

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Did you know:

- A family of four can produce up to an extra 30-40 litres of water from breathing each week, and all this can be added to the air in the home!
- Drying clothes indoors can add up to 10-15 litres of moisture each week – more if it's big thick jumpers and towels you are drying!
- Other household activities like showering, bathing and washing can add an additional 20 litres of moisture each week!

What causes condensation?

During the Autumn and Winter, many homes experience condensation.

This happens when warm moist air comes into contact with a cold surface, like a window, a tiled area, a toilet cistern, mirrors or an external wall.

This results in water droplets forming on those surfaces, which can lead to smelly black mould, which can in some cases lead to health issues. It can also cause considerable damage to items such as clothes, furniture, shoes, books and decorations.

Condensation can occur in any property, it can be just as severe in a very modern home, as it can be in an old draughty home.

This is because some modern homes may be very well insulated and heated, but not have sufficient ventilation.

Some older homes may be well ventilated, but may not be insulated well enough, to be able to heat up properly and maintain that warmth.



Do's and don'ts

Heating



MAINTAIN TEMPERATURE

- Maintain a regular and even heat in the property whenever possible.
- Condensation tends to form on surfaces when the internal temperature drop below 15 °C
- Ideally maintain the inside temperature of your home at between 18 – 21 °C.

THERMOSTAT CONTROL

Control your heating effectively using your room thermostat, heating programmer/timer and thermostatic radiator valves:

<http://shorturl.at/hoD09>



REMOVE OBSTRUCTIONS

Keep radiators and heaters clear and free from obstructions like furniture in front of them.



WARM THE ROOM



Make sure you have warmed up the room before opening a window – warm air lifts moisture off surfaces and then it can travel out through the windows.

STORAGE HEATERS



When using older storage heaters, use the input, output and boost controls as laid out in our guide:

shorturl.at/gMNT1

Ventilation

DRYING

If you must dry clothes indoors, open the windows but close the door to that room.



FURNITURE

- Keep furniture at least 100mm/4 inches away from walls to allow air to circulate.
- Do not overfill wardrobes and keep them aired.



BATHROOM & KITCHEN

- Use extractor fans in bathrooms, shower rooms and kitchens.
- Keep the bathroom door closed when showering or bathing.



WINDOWS




- Open a window to allow moist air out & fresh air in.

- Keep your trickle vents open on your windows if needed.
- Keep fixed vents open and unblocked (in walls and in the underfloor).



Insulation

ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE

- You may be able to check your property's Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), to find out what insulation the property has: www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate 
- Check the EPC to see if your walls are insulated.



LOFT INSULATION



Check the loft, if you have one, to ensure it has 300mm/12 inches of insulation (anything over 150mm/6 inches is doing most of the job).

Ensure good ventilation is maintained in the roof space.

RADIATORS



Put reflective foil behind radiators to reflect heat back into the room.

CURTAINS

- Close curtains and blinds at dusk to keep the heat in.
- When the sun shines make sure the curtains or blinds are open.
- Keep curtains tucked behind radiators where possible




WINDOWS



Draught proof wooden doors and windows if you have them

(A free LEAP home visit will do this if you qualify:

www.ridgewaterenergy.co.uk/projects-and-services/leap/ 



You could apply a shrink-to-fit window film to your windows.

Good housekeeping

CLOTHES

- Hang up clothes outside even in cold weather.



- Wash any clothes, curtains etc effected by mould
- Don't take mouldy items to a new property with you!
- Leather shoes and handbags are particularly prone to damage – do not stack them up in dark corners of wardrobes, they may get damp and mouldy.



DEHUMIDIFIER

You may need to use a dehumidifier if the moisture levels are really high.

WINDOWS

- Wipe up any excess condensation on windows & window sills.
- Rubbing a small spot of washing up liquid to the inside of the window may help stop condensation forming on it.
- Cutting a potato in half and rubbing that on the window and buffing with a cloth afterwards may also help.



KITCHEN

- Use saucepan lids on pans.
- Do not leave the kettle boiling.



BATHROOM

When running a bath, add cold water first before the hot.



TUMBLE DRYERS

Make sure if you use a tumble drier that it is vented to outside.



What else creates moisture and can lead to condensation?

AIR HUMIDIFIER

This adds moisture to the air.



BOTTLE GAS MOBILE ROOM HEATERS

The burning of the gas, creates as much moisture as the amount of gas burnt.



FISH TANKS WITH NO LIDS

The water in the tank will evaporate more quickly and add moisture to the air if it has no lid.



BATHS & SHOWERS

Steam from baths and showers adds to moisture levels!



SOAKING CROCKERY

Leaving pans and washing up soaking in the sink, adds evaporating water in to the air.



KETTLES

Leaving a kettle boiling away creates lots of steam!



Check list and action plan

Confused about where to start?

We suggest you start by looking at the following...

(Depending on your own circumstances)

- Do the bathroom and kitchen have an extractor fan or extracting cooker hood? Do they work and are they clean?
*Report broken or damaged fans to your landlord or letting agent!
Don't have any - ask your landlord or letting agent if there are plans to fit any.
- Check if your windows have trickle vents - make sure they are at least partly open during the colder months in the daytime.
- Get out the saucepan lids and start using them when boiling or heating anything up on the hob.
- Can you lock your window open if it's on the ground floor? A lockable window catch helps maintain security whilst you ventilate.
- Check your property's insulation – is the loft insulated sufficiently? Are the walls insulated? Is there a habitable room in the roof or an accessible underfloor area or basement that needs insulating?
- Do not leave your dishes and pans soaking for more than an hour or two!
- Try to avoid drying clothes indoors wherever possible! (especially thick or large items which contain more water/moisture!)
- Open the curtains and let in the daylight when you can – even better when the sun shines!
- Minimise clutter – lots of items in a home can block air circulation, soak up heat and increase the risk of mould forming.
- Spend some time working out how your heating controls work.
- Keep a record of how much energy you use (electricity/gas) or check your smart meter in-house display or online account/app – this can help you understand what the heating uses per day/week etc and how much your appliances might use!
- Refer to our 'Energy and Money Saving Booklet' for more useful advice to save energy and money, which may help you afford a bit more heating when you really need it!

Help and assistance

BCP Council contacts:

If you live in a council-owned home and you're worried about damp or mould in your property, you can call us on 0800 028 1870 Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4:30pm, or email housing.repairs@bcpcouncil.gov.uk for council housing tenants living in Bournemouth or repairs.helpdesk@bcpcouncil.gov.uk for council housing tenants living in Poole.


Private or landlord owned properties

If you believe the condensation and mould is the result of poor repairs or structural design, and your landlord / managing agent has refused to investigate or remedy the defects, then you can email the Private Sector Housing Team via privatesector.housing@bcpcouncil.gov.uk for further advice and assistance.

Further Advice

Visit the BCP cost-of-living pages for advice and support on energy bills, health and wellbeing: www.bcpcouncil.gov.uk/communities/cost-of-living-help 

Shelter offer support and advice and have a great online video titled 'If you have a damp problem in your rented home, look for the cause': england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/repairs/damp_and_mould_in_rented_homes 

Citizens Advice offer support and advice on damp and mould: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/repairs-in-rented-housing/repairs-common-problems/repairs-damp 

Are you finding it difficult to pay your rent, you're not alone. If anything is putting your private tenancy at risk, please contact Let's Talk Renting:

01202 985104 

www.homelessnesspartnershipbcp.org  or www.hpbc.org 

Search "Understanding damp and mould Gov UK" in Google or other search engine, for the most up to date advice and information.

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