Condensation and Mould in Rented Flats and Houses
A Practical Guide to the Cause Prevention and Treatment

Condensation

What is CONDENSATION ?

There is always some moisture in the air, even if you cannot see it. Condensation occurs when warm moist air hits cold surfaces, which causes the air to condense and form droplets of water often resulting in patches of black mould which does not necessarily grow in the same room that the moisture comes from.

It is commonly noticeable on windows on a cold morning. It happens, even when the weather is dry, primarily between the months of October and April and usually caused as a result of normal day to day living.

What Causes CONDENSATION ?

There are 3 main causes of condensation:

- **Too much moisture in your home.**
- **Insufficient ventilation.**
- **Cool temperatures**.

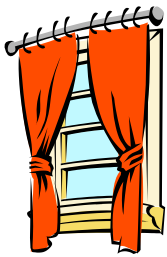
Everyday activities such as breathing, cooking, washing, drying clothes indoors, using portable gas and paraffin heaters, topping up fish tanks etc all add to the moisture already present in the air.

How much moisture can be produced in your home in a day ?

- **2 people active for 1 day = 4 pints**
- **Cooking and boiling a kettle = 6 pints**
- **Having a bath or shower = 2 pints**
- **Washing clothes = 1 pint**
- **Drying clothes = 10 pints**
- **Four people sleeping = 3 pints**
- **Using a paraffin or bottled gas heater = 3 pints**
- **Total amount of moisture produced in your home for 1 day = 29 pints**

Are my damp problems caused by CONDENSATION?

Not all dampness is caused by condensation, sometimes dampness can be as a result of:



Leaking internal or external pipes, roof leaks caused by broken, missing or faulty tiles, guttering or chimney flashings, penetrating damp from porous bricks, rising damp because of defective damp proof course or faulty rendering, mortar joints or blocked cavities and solid walls.

Dampness of this nature will often result in damage to the surface, efflorescence (soluble salts) or a ‘tide mark’ and can occur at any time of the year.

How can I prevent CONDENSATION ?
Ordinary daily activities can produce a lot of moisture quite quickly. Some steps you can take to reduce moisture production in your home are:

- **Open windows to allow moisture laden air to escape.**

- **Cover boiling pans when cooking and use extractor fans if fitted.**

- **Ensure that tumble dryers are properly vented to the outside.**

- **Dry clothes outside where possible. If not in the bathroom with the door closed and windows open or extractor fan on.**

- **Do not run the shower longer than needed as more water vapour gets in to the air.**

- **If you are running a bath, put the cold water in first to reduce the amount of steam.**

- **Do you have a tropical fish tank that regularly requires topping up with water? You could consider fitting a lid.**

- **Do NOT dry clothes or towels on radiators.**

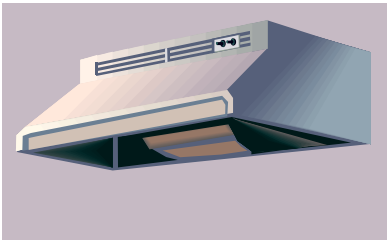
- **Close kitchen and bathroom doors to stop water vapour movement to other parts of the house.**

- **Do not use portable gas or paraffin heaters as they can produce a gallon of water for each gallon of fuel used.**

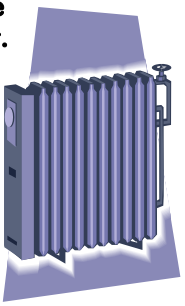
Increase Ventilation

Increasing ventilation will help prevent moisture laden air from being trapped in your home and condensing on the windows, walls and ceilings. Actions that can be taken could be as simple as:

- **Opening a window after bathing, showering or cooking.**
- **If you have trickle vents fitted to your windows, keep them open as much as possible, especially in inhabited rooms.**
- **Move furniture away from walls slightly to allow air to circulate behind them.**
- **It's better to provide ventilation at the point where moisture is produced if possible.**



- **Use extractor fans and cooking hoods to help remove the moisture.**
- **Do not block up fans or vents as they are there to enable moisture to escape.**
- **Wipe down windows or surfaces affected by condensation each morning—do not dry the cloths on the radiators as this will only put the moisture back in the air.**
- **Leave cupboard and wardrobe doors open periodically so that air can circulate.**
- **Where possible try to position wardrobes, chairs and large items of furniture against internal walls.**



Raise the Temperature

The best way to heat your home is through steady background heating. This is because warmer air can hold more moisture, and as the temperature of the walls increases the possibility of condensation forming on them is reduced.

Mould

THE PROBLEM
Every dwelling, irrespective of its construction, contains within its fabric mould spores which are dormant and completely harmless. However, given the right conditions these spores will germinate resulting in extensive growths of black disfiguring mould.

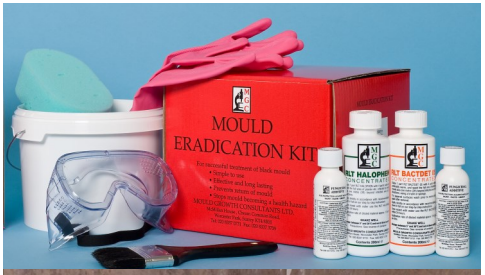
Mould needs very little nutrient and will grow on walls and ceilings irrespective of the decorative finish.

Where do you find Mould?
It can be found on and adjacent to windows, in the corners and edges of rooms and behind and inside wardrobes and cupboards especially if they are against an external wall.

Mould can even grow on clothes, handbags and shoes if they are hung up in wardrobes when still damp, wet or stored so tightly to prevent air from circulating.

Do **NOT** use bleach to clean walls or ceilings. This may be hazardous, will only have a temporary effect and may also end up encouraging mould growth in the future.

Mould Treatment



Mould growth on walls and ceilings must be treated with a MGC Mould Eradication Kit in accordance with MGC Mould Eradication Instructions as follows.

Eradication of Mould – Wash down mould infected surfaces with RLT BACTDET 05 diluted with 4 parts of warm water using a brush, sponge or cloth.

Extend treatment one metre in all directions beyond all visible signs of infection.

When the solution becomes dirty make up a fresh one.

Coverage must not exceed 10 square metres per diluted litre.

Allow to dry.

Wallpapered Surfaces - wash down with RLT BACTDET 05 solution **prior** to stripping. Bag up wallpaper, seal and remove from the premises.

Immediately wash infected area again with RLT BACTDET 05 solution and allow to dry before proceeding.

This stage is essential as RLT BACTDET 05 will kill all mould spores and prevent them spreading to other areas.

Preparation - Prepare surfaces in accordance with good trade practice.

Mould Eradication Kits are available from MGC

Scrape off all loose or flaking paint and rub down to a sound surface. Fill any holes or cracks in the surface with a proprietary filler and allow to dry.
Thoroughly abrade previously gloss painted surfaces with glasspaper to form a key.
All preparation work must be done **before** the barrier, RLT HALOPHEN, has been applied.

Fungicidal Barrier - Apply by brush 1 coat of RLT HALOPHEN diluted with 4 parts of clean water. Extend the treatment at least one metre beyond the areas of infection in all directions and allow to dry.

Coverage must not exceed 10 square metres per diluted litre. Brush RLT HALOPHEN well in for maximum penetration. Pay special attention to corners and junctions. In areas of heavy infection apply a second coat and allow to dry before proceeding.

Staining and/or Efflorescence - Apply by brush 1-2 liberal coats of MGC STAIN BLOCK or MGC DAMP SEAL as appropriate to seal the surface and prevent any bleeding through prior to decoration.

Decoration - Ensure all surfaces are clean and dry. Add the contents of one MGC FUNGICIDAL ADDITIVE to each 2.5 litres of Emulsion paint , Wallpaper Paste or Size. Add one MGC FUNGICIDAL ADDITIVE to each 5 litres of Primer, Undercoat or Gloss Finish. Thoroughly stir materials after adding MGC FUNGICIDAL ADDITIVE.

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