



**Controlling
damp and black
mould in your
home**

Our approach to damp and mould

Our aim is to provide and maintain healthy, safe and warm homes for residents. We aim to manage reports of damp and mould proactively, through the completion of reactive repairs, planned works or in some cases, by providing advice and information on measures that can be taken to help manage and prevent damp, mould and condensation.

We have worked to improve our approach to dealing with reports of damp, mould and condensation over the past 12 months. We are carrying out a stock condition survey programme which, once completed, we will have surveyed 8,500 properties. This will help us plan our future improvement programmes and make sure our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Reporting damp and mould

When you report damp and mould to us, we will ask you questions to understand your situation and to identify possible issues that might be causing the problem. We have a dedicated team of operatives that aims to arrange an appointment with you within 48 hours of your report. We aim to attend within 14 days of you first reporting the issue to us.

If our operatives feel a specialist contractor is required to carry out bespoke works or a survey, this will be arranged with you.

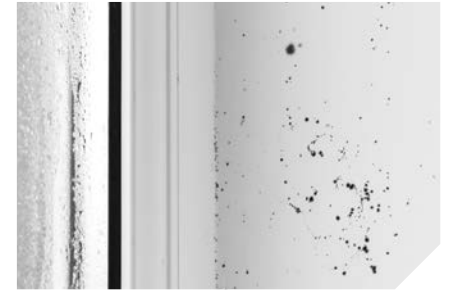
Depending on the outcome of the initial visit(s), we will either share advice on treating the problem or we'll schedule follow up appointments to resolve the issue.

During winter, condensation can become a problem in many homes, and this can lead to damp and mould.

It is caused when warm, moist air hits cold surfaces such as windows or external wall and condenses, running down the cold surface as water droplets. If left, this can develop into black mould which looks and smells bad, and can cause health problems, and damage clothes, furniture, and decorations.

To prevent condensation, the home needs to be ventilated to allow air to circulate so that moisture-filled air can escape outside. Condensation is the most common cause of damp and mould in homes.

Rising or penetrating damp can cause also problems in your home, but these are less common than condensation.



Types of damp



Rising damp

Rising damp is a relatively rare form of damp that affects walls. It is caused by failed or damaged damp proofing, allowing ground water containing salts to travel up through ground floor walls. You will often first notice rising damp by the damage it causes to walls; plaster and paint can deteriorate, and wallpaper may loosen.

This type of damp can usually be identified because it is often associated with a visible stain in the form of a tide mark at the edge of the area of damp, this is caused by salt deposits in the water. If you have rising damp, black mould will not form on these patches due to the salt deposits.



Penetrating damp

Penetrating damp is caused by water finding its way inside from the outside. Although it can happen at all levels of a building, it is usually higher up. It can be caused by overflowing gutters, missing roof tiles, leaking pipes, badly fitting or damaged windows and doors and their surrounds, as well as covered air bricks.

Signs of penetrating damp are:

- ▶ Growing areas of damp on walls or ceilings.
- ▶ Blotchy patches on walls.
- ▶ Wet and crumbly plaster.
- ▶ Signs of black mould, spores or mildew isolated to one area.
- ▶ Drips, puddles or signs of leaks.

Condensation



Condensation is formed where the outside temperature differs greatly from the inside temperature. It can occur anywhere on a wall and can cause mould to form. It can lead to stained or damaged wallpaper, wall surfaces, window frames, furniture and clothing. Mould and its spores can cause a musty smell that is often associated with damp.

The most common causes of condensation are:

- ▶ Steam from cooking and boiling the kettle.
- ▶ Baths and showers.
- ▶ Drying clothes inside.
- ▶ Unsuitable venting of tumble dryers.

The following areas are particularly prone to condensation:

- ▶ Cold surfaces such as mirrors, windows and window frames.
- ▶ Kitchens and bathrooms where a lot of steam is created.
- ▶ External walls, walls of unheated rooms and cold corners of rooms.
- ▶ Wardrobes, cupboards and behind furniture against an external wall and a lack of ventilation.



Steps you can take to reduce condensation

Here are some easy steps you can take to reduce or prevent condensation from occurring in your home. We understand some of these may not be practical for you or you may need repairs to items such as windows, fans or heating. Let us know as soon as possible and we can arrange to put it right.

Do:

- ▶ Open your windows as much as possible.
- ▶ Keep trickle-vents open at all times if they are fitted in your property.
- ▶ When preparing a bath, running the cold water first before the hot water will reduce steam by 90%.
- ▶ Keep lids on pans when cooking.
- ▶ Keep ventilation fans switched on if they are fitted in your property.
- ▶ Keep kitchen and bathroom doors closed to stop moisture escaping.
- ▶ Ventilate bedrooms at night while people are sleeping in them.
- ▶ Keep furniture away from walls to allow air flow around the room.
- ▶ Wipe condensation from windows and windowsills as soon as possible after it forms.
- ▶ Treat the first signs of mould with a mould and mildew cleaner.

Don't:

- ▶ Dry clothes on radiators.
- ▶ Use an unvented tumble dryer.
- ▶ Use bottled gas heaters (they produce eight pints of water per cylinder).
- ▶ Use your gas cooker to heat your kitchen.
- ▶ Block permanent fans.
- ▶ Obstruct or block air bricks inside or outside your home.
- ▶ Block windows or trickle vents in any room.



Advice for removing mould



You can help to avoid mould forming by wiping down condensation when it appears.

If mould does appear, it can be cleared, but it can be a slow process.



Tips for removing mould:

- ▶ Do not brush mould as this dry friction can release spores into the air which can be harmful if inhaled.
- ▶ Never paint directly over mould. The paint can cause mould to come back worse than before, even if you use fungicidal paint.
- ▶ Treat the mould daily (or more if needed) with an anti-mould and mildew spray, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- ▶ Protect yourself, wearing gloves and other PPE if recommended by the manufacturer.
- ▶ Keep windows open as the areas you have treated dry.
- ▶ You can repaint the area after mould has been completely removed, ideally using a fungicidal paint.

Mould that cannot be cleared could be due to an underlying cause not being fixed, such as gaps in loft insulation or other issues. If you're having problems with persistent mould, please contact us.

Report repairs and maintenance issues early

The risk of damp and mould arising can be reduced by reporting maintenance and repairs that are needed quickly. Report any problems as soon as you notice them.

Types of repairs that could lead to problems with damp and mould are:

- ▶ Gaps or wet loft insulation.
- ▶ Leaking pipes, water, or waste.
- ▶ Leaking gutters and rainwater pipes.
- ▶ Rotten fascias, soffits, or barge boards.
- ▶ Breached damp courses.
- ▶ Damaged render, pointing or brickwork.

Find out more about our approach to damp and mould at:
www.emh.co.uk/housing/for-customers/maintenance/damp-and-mould/



If you are still concerned about damp and mould after following this guidance, please contact our Customer Service Centre. We are here to help you.

Call us on: **0300 123 6000**

Email: dampandmould@emh.co.uk

[Manage your account, report a repair and change your contact details online via myhomeonline:](#)

