UNDERSTANDING DAMP AND MOULD

Leicester
Student
Living

Understanding Damp & Mould

Damp and mould is a common problem for tenants and landlords regardless of the age of the property. Most important thing is to identify the cause(s) and resolve them

Condensation

Condensation occurs in a dwelling when warm moist air produced by ordinary activities such as showering or cooking meets a cold surface such as an external wall or window.

The moisture laden air will remain internally if ventilation does not occur and will gravitate towards the nearest cold surface where it condenses.

Moisture is also naturally occurring in the air and when air temperatures drop it will release this water in droplet form. This is known as the dew point.

Condensation generally occurs during cold spells of weather. It will appear on cold surfaces and also in microclimatic areas where there is little movement; for example behind a cupboard. This will often lead to the formation of mould growth and mainly occurs in corners of rooms, in cupboards or on north facing walls, as these are generally the coldest, this change of environment provides a suitable habitat for growth of mould

Could the mould be caused by something else?

Yes. Condensation may not be the only factor when mould growth occurs. However, condensation is the most common form of damp within student properties.

Rising damp can occur if the damp proof course or membrane within the walls or floors of your student house has been breached. Especially in ground floor flats as well as houses due to damp proof course failure, something that generally occurs over a long, long period of time.

Penetrating damp. Rain may also seep through cracks in brickwork or through missing tiles on external roof surfaces, this would involve the brick work being re pointed and is rare within Leicester.

Condensation will not be limited to certain areas and may cause growth in different areas of a room and you may also notice furniture and clothing becomes affected.

What can I do?

There are a number of things you can do to limit condensation. Use the handy check list below to see how you can minimise condensation at your student property.

Things to do:	Checklist
Open window to allow fresh air in	
Turn extractor fan on (if applicable)	
Do not dry clothes in the room	
Turn the heating down to 20oC	
Open door to allow air in house to circulate	
Do not dry clothes on radiators	

What else can I do?

How to Avoid Condensation:
With the correct balance of heating and ventilation, condensation can easily be avoided. The heating helps keep the property warm and the ventilation will enable excess moisture laden air to escape.

Using the thermostat. Set it on for long periods on a low setting or have it switched to operate automatically on shorter periods for

DID YOU KNOW..

In ONE nights sleep we breath our the equivalent of 300ml of water vapour.

HOT TIP

Improving ventilation (opening windows, doors) can stop mould

at least seven hours a day. Do not adjust the thermostat manually when set but trust the system to regulate itself for you. Make sure there are no cold zones in the home by turning all radiators on.

DID YOU KNOW.

Washing clothes produces 1 pint of moisture

Having a bath produces 2 pints of moisture

Combatting Moisture:

- ✓ Cover saucepans.
- ✓ Dry clothing outside rather than on radiators.
- ✓ Wipe away condensation as quickly as it's spotted.
- ✓ Keep window trickle vents open constantly and open windows as much as possible (especially after cooking or showering) to allow a through flow of air whilst maintaining a heat balance.
- ✓ Ensure extractor fans are operational, you can test pull by holding a sheet of tissue paper against it and seeing if it sticks.
- ✓ Turn on the cold tap of the bath first so that when the hot water hits its doesn't produce as much steam.
- ✓ Close doors in wet areas to stop the spread of moisture to other rooms.