

## How to avoid **CONDENSATION**

These three steps will help you reduce the condensation in your home.

### **1 Produce less moisture**

Some ordinary daily activities produce a lot of moisture very quickly.

- Cover pans and do not leave kettles boiling.
- Avoid using paraffin and portable flueless bottled gas.
- Dry washing outdoors on a line, or put it in the bathroom with the door closed and windows open or fan on.
- Vent any tumble dryer on the outside, unless it is the self-condensation type. DIY kits are available for this.

### **2 Ventilate to remove moisture**

You can ventilate your home without making draughts.

- Keep a small window ajar or a trickle ventilator open when someone is in the room.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening the windows wider. Or better still use a humidistat-controlled electric fan. These come on automatically when the air becomes humid, and are cheap to run.
- Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use, even if your kitchen or bathroom has an extractor fan. A door closer is advisable, as this will prevent moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms, which are often colder and are more likely to get condensation.
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes. Avoid putting too many things in them as this stops the air circulating. Cut a ventilating slot in the back of each shelf or use slatted shelves. Cut breather holes in doors and in the back of wardrobe and leave space between the back of wardrobe and the wall. Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls.
- If you replace your window units at any time make sure that the new frames incorporate trickle vents.

### **3 Insulate, draughtproof and heat your home**

Insulation and draughtproofing will help keep your warm and will cut fuel bills. When the whole home is warmer, condensation is less likely.

- Insulate your loft. Remember to draughtproof the loft hatch but do not block the opening under the eaves
- Consider cavity wall insulation. Before deciding though you should talk with your building inspector as building regulations approval is required.
- Consider secondary and double-glazing of windows to reduce heat loss and draughts but you must ensure that there is some ventilation.
- In cold weather, keep low background heating on all day even when there is no one at home.

### **Some words of warning**

- Do not block permanent ventilators
- Do not completely block chimneys. Instead, leave a hole about two bricks in size and to fit a louvered grille over it.
- Do not draughtproof rooms where there is no condensation or mould.
- Do not draughtproof a room where there is a cooker or a fuel burning heating, for example, a gas fire.
- Do not draughtproof windows in bathroom and kitchen.

## **DAMP AND MOULD**

First steps against mould

- First treat any mould you may already have in your home. If you then deal with the basic problem of condensation, mould should not reappear.
- To kill and remove mould, wipe down walls and windows frames with a fungicidal wash which carries a health and safety executive 'approval number'. Follow manufacturer's instruction precisely. Dry clean any mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets.
- Disturbing mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning can increase the risk of respiratory problems.
- After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring. Note that this paint is not effective if overlaid with ordinary paints or wallpaper.

**The only lasting way of avoiding severe mould is to eliminate dampness.**