

Damp and Mould in your home

How to keep your home
free from damp and mould



What causes Damp and Mould?

Dampness can appear in a number of homes and can be caused by faults in the structure, not enough heating, not enough insulation, or not enough ventilation. Dampness can lead to mould growth which can make breathing problems worse.

There are three types of dampness that can appear in your home:

- **Condensation**
- **Rising dampness**
- **Penetrating dampness**

It is possible to get more than one type of dampness in your property. Each needs to be treated in a different way, so it is important to know what type of damp is affecting your home.



What is Penetrating Damp?

Penetrating damp is caused by water leaking through walls or roofs. This type of damp may expand across your walls or ceiling or work its way down, but will not travel up your walls like rising dampness. Penetrating damp is usually caused by structural problems in a building such as faulty guttering or roofing or cracks in the walls or render which means walls or roofs are regularly soaked with water. It can also be caused by internal leaks such as pipes under the sink or seals round a bath.

What is Condensation?

Condensation is the most common kind of damp. Warm air holds more water than cold air and so when warm air cools down it has to lose some of the moisture. Condensation happens when warm moist air cools down or comes into contact with a cold surface. Condensation is common in rooms where a lot of moisture is generated, such as kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms. The warm, moist air will travel to other parts of the house which are cooler and will also condense there. Bedrooms are much cooler, and the air is quite still, so are more likely to have condensation dampness.



What is Rising Damp?

Rising damp is caused by ground water moving up through a wall or floor. Walls or floors will naturally soak up water from the ground, but usually it is stopped from causing damage by a barrier called a damp-proof course or damp-proof membrane.

Newer properties will have a damp-proof course or a damp-proof membrane. But older buildings may not or they may be worn or damaged. If this is the case your walls or floor may suffer from rising damp.

Rising damp can also happen when there is a lack of drainage or the level of the ground outside your home is higher than your damp-proof course allowing water to get above it.



Preventing damp and mould

Cooking, showering and drying clothes creates extra moisture in your home.

To reduce this, it helps to:

- Cover pans when cooking
- Use extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms. Extractor fans cost as little as 7p a week to run. Fans in your home will run automatically when there is moisture in the air, please leave them switched on.
- Close internal doors when you cook or shower
- Avoid drying clothes indoors. If you do have to dry clothes inside, close the door of the room where they are drying and open a window in the room.
- If using a tumble dryer, make sure it's vented so the steam is emitted outside your home
- Keep a small gap between your furniture and walls to let air circulate
- Open bedroom windows for 5 to 10 minutes when you get up
- If it's possible, heating your home a little also helps. A low temperature of at least 15 degrees in all rooms can prevent damp and mould.



Dealing with damp and mould

Your landlord's responsibilities.

Dundee city Council will deal with damp or mould caused by structural or repair problems, including:

- Leaks in the roof
- Cracks or holes in walls
- Rotting window or door frames
- Lack of ventilation or poor ventilation in your home
- Water coming into your home from the ground

Dundee City Council will;

- Deal with damp and mould in a reasonable amount of time
- Carry out a Property Inspection to determine any actions required
- Provide expert guidance on condensation and how this can be managed
- Review existing ventilation within the property and the potential installation of extractor fans in kitchen and bathroom or ventilation systems dependant on property needs
- Help you to find the right advice on heating, ventilation, and condensation as well as energy efficiency measures through an energy advice referral.
- In certain cases we may install insulated plasterboard to rooms which may be prone to high condensation levels and low room temperatures

Your responsibilities

Check for signs of damp and mould. These can be:

- A damp and musty smell
- Mould or mildew on walls, floors or ceilings
- Walls, floors or ceilings that feel cold or damp
- Dark or discoloured patches on walls or plaster
- Lifting or peeling wallpaper
- Excessive condensation on windows

If mould grows you can remove it easily by wiping down walls with a fungicidal wash which is available to buy in any supermarket. If you deal with mould quickly, it shouldn't come back.

If you have a damp problem that persists you can call the Housing Repair centre on **01382 434343**

If you are struggling to heat your home affordably you can contact; Home Energy Scotland for free advice and support on **0808 808 2282** or Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project on **01382 434840**

For advice on help with the cost of living, please visit the Dundee city council web page at www.dundee.gov.uk/costofliving council web page at www.dundee.gov.uk/costofliving



