



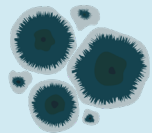
Preventing damp and mould in your home

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/dampandmould

Causes of damp and mould

According to a survey conducted by the Housing Ombudsman, the top three causes of damp and mould are:

- poor ventilation
- leaks
- structural problems
- condensation



It should be noted that these causes are often not mutually exclusive, and that some or all of the causes may be present in any particular case. Condensation is moisture caused by breathing, cooking, washing and drying clothes. It can also be caused by the design and construction of a building. Your home **should** be able to cope with normal levels of moisture without the need to open windows or buy dehumidifiers to reduce damp.

Rising damp occurs when a property doesn't have adequate damp proofing or there is a breach in the property's structure. It's caused by moisture rising up in walls. You can spot rising damp in your home by looking for tide marks or salt stains. This tends to rise around one metre from the ground.

Penetrating damp comes from issues on the exterior of a property, for example from its:

- roof
- brickwork
- pointing
- windows
- doors



Water can build up inside walls and cause damp and mould growth if a property isn't kept in good repair.

Penetrating damp can also be caused by internal issues, like when poor sealant around a shower tray allows water to leak into the surrounding walls and ceilings.

Health risks

If you have damp and mould in your home, you're more likely to have respiratory problems, respiratory infections, allergies or asthma. Damp and mould can also affect the immune system.

Some people are more sensitive than others, including:

- babies and children
- older people
- those with existing skin problems, such as atopic eczema
- those with respiratory problems, such as allergies and asthma
- those with a weakened immune system, such as those having chemotherapy

How does it affect your health?

Moulds produce allergens (substances that can cause an allergic reaction), irritants and, sometimes, toxic substances.

Inhaling or touching mould spores may cause an allergic reaction, such as sneezing, a runny nose, red eyes and skin rash. Moulds can also cause asthma attacks

Other effects may include:

- contributing to excess heat loss
- putting up heating bills
- damaging building fabric and contents, including clothes and furniture



What we will do for City of London Housing Service tenants reporting damp and mould in their homes

We encourage our tenants to let us know of any issues with condensation/damp/mould as soon as possible and, these are given a high priority.

- If we can identify the root cause (for example, a leak) easily over the phone, we'll arrange a repair
- Wherever possible, we will inspect within five working days (subject to access) to identify the possible causes and associated remedial works
- Remedial works will be completed within seven working days of an order being placed.
- We will also discuss the matter with our tenants, providing advice and guidance as appropriate
- Completed works will be post-inspected by our Property Services Officers

Check our website for images to help identify damp and mould in your home:
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/dampandmould

Scan the QR code with your phone camera to visit the 'Damp and mould' page



What we are doing to prevent damp and mould

Like most housing providers, we have been reviewing our procedures for dealing with damp and mould in our homes and we have introduced some new initiatives including:

- Reviewing all previous cases of mould and damp reported in the last 12 months to ensure that the problem was effectively dealt with and has not recurred
- Carrying out independent specialist sample condition surveys of a number of homes to assess whether there are problems with dampness and mould that we are not aware of
- Inspecting and repairing or replacing defective rain water goods; (gutters and downpipes)
- Raising awareness of the potential problems caused by damp and mould in homes
- Providing specific training for staff on identifying and dealing with damp and mould

As part of the significant investment we are making to ensure our homes meet and exceed the Decent Homes Standard, we are installing humidity tracking mechanical extract fans in new kitchen and bathroom installations and we are currently trialling the installation of environmental sensors that will provide real-time reports on air condition (including humidity and dampness) within our homes.

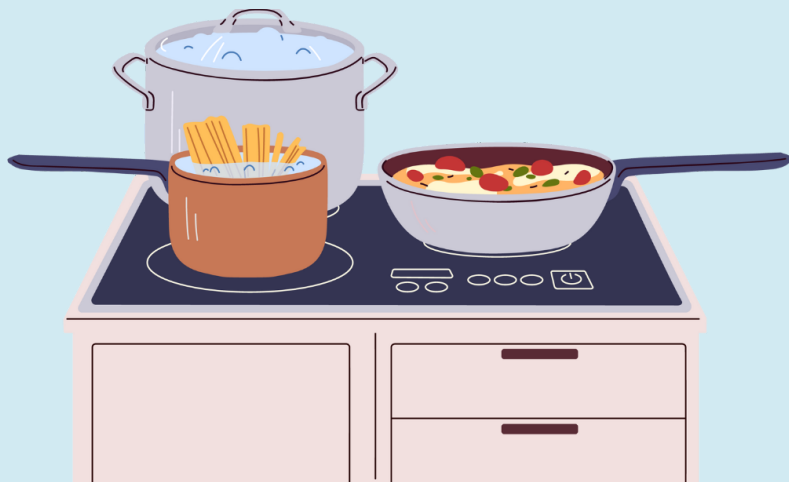
Major works such as roof renewals, replacement windows, new heating and ventilation systems, will go some way to addressing potential sources of damp and mould.

Many of our properties are accessed by various contractors carrying out either day-to-day repairs (including gas servicing, electrical checks, general repairs etc) or major works such as replacement windows and replacement fire doors. Both staff and contractors are instructed to report any issues relating to damp and mould.

What residents can do to resolve damp and mould issues

Minimise moisture in the air

- Cover pans when cooking and switch on extractor fans
- Dry washing on a clothes rack in the bathroom and open the window or put extractor fans on and close the door
- Wipe condensation off windows and windowsills
- If possible, move furniture away from walls and radiators to allow air to flow between them
- Wipe down walls and tiles after showers and baths
- Keep steam from kettles away from underneath cupboards
- Keeping heating on a low temperature for longer periods will help to heat your home more evenly and efficiently than turning on heating in short, hot blasts



Let fresh air into your home

- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when cooking and using the bath or shower, even if you have an extractor fan
- Open windows when using a tumble dryer and make sure the hose goes outside if possible
- Clean vents and extractor fans regularly and make sure they are not blocked by furniture
- If you have trickle vents on your window frames, make sure they are open
- Open windows for 5-10 minutes when getting up, to let fresh air in and let warm moisture out

Contact us

We encourage our tenants to let us know of any issues with condensation/damp/mould as soon as possible – they will be given a high priority.

Report using the online form

<https://forms.office.com/e/cYRcjrafaf>

Scan the QR code with your phone camera to complete the online form



Email

propertyservices@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Telephone

0800 035 0003

Help and support

We're acutely aware the cost of living crisis is likely to make problems with damp and mould worse, as people struggle to heat their homes.

Visit our getting help with the cost of living page if you need support to reduce your energy bills and energy consumption:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/costofliving

If you live outside the City, check your council website for their cost of living page.

Scan the QR code with your phone camera to visit the City of London 'Getting help with the cost of living' page

