

# How to keep your home free from damp & mould



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**RESIDENTIAL TEAM**



HOUSING

## Translation Advice

If you have difficulty understanding this booklet please visit Housing Services at the address below where we can arrange a telephone interpreting service.

Albanian Nese keni veshtersi per te kuptuar kete botim, ju lutemi ejani ne recepcionin ne adresen e shenuar me poshte ku ne mund te organizojme perkthime nepermjet telefonit.

Arabic إذا كانت لديك صعوبة في فهم هذا المنشور، فنرجو زيارة الإستقبال في العنوان المعطى أدناه حيث بإمكاننا أن نرتب لخدمة ترجمة شفوية هاتفية.

Bengali এই প্রকাশনার অর্থ বুঝতে পারায় যদি আপনার কোন সমস্যা হয়, নিচে দেওয়া ঠিকানায় রিসেপশন-এ চলে আসুন যেখানে আমরা আপনাকে টেলিফোনে দোভাষীর সেবা প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা করতে পারবো।

Farsi اگر در فهمیدن این نشریه مشکل دارید، لطفاً به مین پذیرش در آدرس قید شده در زیر رجوع فرمایید تا سرویس ترجمه تلفنی برایتان فراهم آورده شود.

Gujarati જો તમને આ પુસ્તિકાની વિગતો સમજવામાં મુશ્કેલી પડતી હોય તો, કૃપયા નીચે જણાવેલ સ્થળના હિસાબને પર આવો, જ્યાં અમે ટેલિફોન પર ગુજરાતીમાં ઇન્ટરપ્રિટીંગ સેવાની ગોઠવણ કરી આપીશું.

Punjabi ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਉੱਪਰ ਰਿਸੈਪਸ਼ਨ 'ਤੇ ਆਓ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਤੇ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰਿਟਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

Urdu اگر آپ کو اس اشاعت کو سمجھنے میں کوئی مشکل ہے تو، براہ کرم نیچے دیئے ہوئے ایڈریس کے استقبال پر جا کر ملنے، جہاں ہم آپ کیلئے ٹیلیفون انٹرپرائٹنگ سروس (ٹیلیفون پر ترجمانی کی سروس) کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں۔

**If you would like a copy of this leaflet in braille, large print, on audio tape, or in a community language, please contact us on: 020 8891 7892: Minicom number: 020 8891 7404.**

**Published by: Housing Services, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 3BZ.**

For more information about this document, please contact:

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## Does your home suffer from damp?

Damp can cause mould to form on walls, furniture and clothes and also make timber window frames rot.

### Some damp is caused by condensation.

This leaflet explains how condensation is formed and how you can keep it to a minimum, so reducing the risk of dampness and mould growth.

Much of the advice was originally available as a Department of Environment, Transport and Regions leaflet. Crown Copyright Acknowledged

## Condensation

Moisture is in the air, even if you cannot see it. You notice it when you see your breath on a cold day, or when the mirror mists over when you have a bath.

As the air gets colder, it cannot hold all this moisture and tiny drops of water appear, usually on cold surfaces. **This is condensation.**

Condensation occurs mainly during cold weather, whether it is raining or dry. It appears on cold surfaces and in places where there is little movement of air. You can find it in corners, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It frequently forms on north-facing walls because these walls are usually the coldest.

So, if its damp it must be **condensation?**

Condensation isn't the only cause of damp.

It also comes from:

- Rain, as it can seep through the roof where a tile or slate is missing, or spill from a blocked gutter. It can penetrate around window frames if not sealed properly, or leak through a cracked pipe.

- Leaking pipes, gutters or overflows
- Rising damp due to a defective damp-course or because there is no damp-course. Any damp mark will be at a low level.

These causes of damp often leave a 'tidemark'.

If your home is damp for any of these reasons it will require works to remedy the situation.

If you do not think the damp comes from any of these causes, then it is probably condensation.

## To prevent Condensation

There are three steps that will help you prevent condensation forming in your home.

### I Produce less moisture

Tasks that you carry out in your home may produce large amounts of moisture.

- Don't dry clothes on your radiators, this will put large amounts of moisture in to the air. If you do have to use to the radiators, open as many windows as possible.
- Vent any tumble dryer to the outside of your property, unless it is the self-condensing type. DIY kits are available for this.
- While cooking cover pans and do not leave kettles boiling.
- Avoid using paraffin and portable flueless bottled gas heaters as these heaters put a lot of moisture into the air.
- Dry washing outdoors on a line, or put it in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or fan on.

## 2 Ventilate your home

You can ventilate your home without making draughts.

- Keep your windows slightly open or a trickle ventilator open. Some types of windows have a double latch. This allows the window to be locked while still being slightly open.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening the window 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 they are in use, even if your kitchen or bathroom has an extractor fan. A door closer is advisable, as this will help prevent moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms, which are often colder and more likely to get condensation.
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes. Avoid putting too many things in them as this stops the air circulating. Cut a ventilation slot in the back of each shelf or use slatted shelves. Cut 'breather' holes in doors and in the back of wardrobes and leave space between the back of the 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 ventilators.

Government changes made to the Building Regulations mean that from 1 April 2002 replacement glazing, installed in existing buildings, will require Building Regulation approval. Approvals can be obtained from a number of sources:

- Richmond Council Building Control - in all types of buildings (0845 6122 660)
- Fenestration Self-Assessment Scheme (FENSA) - For FENSA you should call 0870 780 2028 or consult their website [www.fensa.co.uk](http://www.fensa.co.uk). This will enable you to find a FENSA registered installer in your area.

### 3 Insulate, draughtproof and heat your home

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

- In cold weather, keep your heating on a low setting all day, even when there is no one at home.
- Insulate your loft. Remember to draughtproof the loft hatch but do not block the opening under the eaves.
- Draft proof around external doors and windows

#### Details to check for

- Do not block permanent ventilators e.g air bricks. Look around your property internally and external to look to see if air bricks are blocked.
- Do not completely block chimneys. Instead, leave a hole about two bricks in size and fit a louvered grille over it.
- Do not draught proof a room where there is a cooker or a fuel burning heater, for example, a gas fire.
- Do not draught proof windows in the bathroom and kitchen.

## How to treat mould

- To kill and remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash, which carries a Health and Safety Executive 'approval number'. Follow the manufacturer's instructions precisely. Dry-clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets. Disturbing mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning can increase the risk of respiratory problems.
- If you have dealt with the basic problem of condensation, mould should not reappear.
- After treatment, try redecorating 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 way of preventing severe mould growth is to eliminate the cause of the dampness.

## Heating and Insulation Grants

If you are

- on a low income and aged 60 or over
- on a means tested benefit and aged 60 or over
- on means tested benefit and with children aged 16 or under
- on means tested benefit and disabled

You may be eligible for a grant for heating and insulation measures under the Coldbusters scheme. Phone Coldbusters on 0800 358 6668 for more information.

### More Information and Advice

If you have any questions or would like more advice  
phone the Residential Team on:  
020 8891 7857/7893/7894/7896

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