

# Guide to Damp and Mould



# What is damp and mould?

## Condensation

Condensation can occur when warm, moist air comes into contact with a cold surface.

Condensation occurs when there is an imbalance between ventilation, heating, and moisture levels in the home. Everyday activities such as breathing, cooking, bathing, and drying clothes indoors release moisture into the air, which can lead to condensation if not properly managed.



Under the right conditions, it can form on nearly any surface, and it typically happens more frequently between October and April, when temperatures are lower and indoor heating increases the amount of moisture in the air.

Condensation can lead to mould growth, which may damage clothing, furniture, and wallpaper. Once the mould dries out, it can release spores into the air, potentially causing breathing problems for some people, especially those with asthma or other respiratory conditions.

Certain types of homes may be more prone to condensation. CHS will carry out an investigation to identify any underlying causes by checking the insulation, extractor fans, heating systems, and the seals on windows and doors.

## Damp

**Penetrating damp** occurs when moisture enters a property due to issues such as damaged roofs, guttering, walls, or windows, or from an internal leak, such as a broken pipe. These problems allow water to seep through and affect the interior of the building.

This type of damp often results in water staining on walls and ceilings, typically near the source of the leak. Unlike condensation-related damp, you are unlikely to see significant mould growth in these areas.

**Rising damp** typically occurs when the **external ground level is raised above the damp-proof course (DPC)** in the walls. This allows moisture from the ground to travel up through the brickwork by capillary action.

Both penetrating and rising damp are usually more noticeable after periods of rainfall and are commonly found on external walls. Affected areas will often look and feel damp to the touch.

# Preventing damp and mould

At CHS Group, we are committed to helping all of our tenants experiencing damp and mould. This quick guide offers some simple solutions to help reduce the risk of damp and mould in your home and how to deal with it should it appear.



Where possible, dry clothes outside, or on an airer in a well-ventilated room



Heat the property for as long as you can (ideally 18 degrees C) and don't obstruct the radiators



When cooking or showering, open windows, keep doors shut and cover pots with lids



Open windows, even for short bursts. Use extractor fans and trickle vents where you have them



Move furniture away from walls to improve airflow and keep curtains open during the day



Wipe away condensation with a clean cloth as soon as you see it

More information about damp and mould can be found on our website [www.chsgroup.org.uk](http://www.chsgroup.org.uk)

# How to clean damp and mould

- You can tackle small areas of mould yourself by following proper guidance and using appropriate cleaning methods
- Ensure the room is well ventilated when cleaning and protect the surfaces around you
- Use gloves, safety glasses and a face mask before cleaning
- Keep any children and animals away from the area/room
- For safe mould cleaning, we recommend using white vinegar. Thick mould strands can be effectively treated with a simple 80:20 solution, that is, 80% white vinegar and 20% water. Fill a container with this solution and use a clean microfiber cloth dipped into it to gently wipe away surface mould.
- Alternatively, mix a couple of tablespoons of bicarbonate of soda with a few drops of vinegar in a bowl until you form a thick paste. Using a microfiber cloth, apply a small amount of the paste to the affected area and gently work it in. Once treated, wipe the area down with the 80:20 vinegar and water solution to remove any residue.
- Dry the affected area with a clean, dry cloth and leave the room to ventilate
- Dispose of any rags that you have used to clean mould after using
- Avoid using bleach or vacuum cleaners on mould, as they can release mould spores into the air, which may cause respiratory problems, especially for people with existing health conditions.

**80/20**



**You can report damp and mould issues to us as soon as you notice it, even if it is minor. You can contact CHS in several ways:**

- Phone us on **0300 111 3555**
- Contact us **online** on our website via the contact enquiry form (by selecting 'reporting damp and mould')
- **Speak** to our contractors or any member of our staff.

## How we can help...

If you are experiencing damp and mould or have any concerns about the issue, please get in touch with our contractor.

If the problem is significant hazard, a surveyor may also visit your home and share guidance on how to prevent damp and mould and arrange the appropriate repairs.

We may also assist with cleaning mould where it has become an urgent problem.

If the source of the problem is quite complex, we may also request specialist advice or use equipment to monitor the condition of your property.



## Concerns about your health...

Your health and wellbeing is our top priority so please let us know if you have any health issues that may be affected by damp and mould.

If we think there is a significant risk to your health, we may need to prioritise your repair and if we decide remaining in the property isn't the right choice for you, we'll discuss all options available.

## Money advice...

We understand that some tenants may be struggling with household bills, and this can contribute towards problems with mould.

Our Money Matters Service can offer free advice on different ways to increase your income and is available to all CHS tenants.

If you think that our Money Matters team can help you, contact us on 0300 111 3555 or email [moneyadvice@chsgroup.org.uk](mailto:moneyadvice@chsgroup.org.uk) to speak to one of our advisors over the phone, via email or through a home visit.



## Complaints...

At CHS, we always aim to provide a high-quality service to support people within the local community.

However, if you're not happy with how CHS or our contractor has handled your damp and mould repair, you can contact the Property Services Team on **0300 111 3555** to discuss this further, or to make a complaint. A copy of CHS Group's Complaint's Policy and Compensation Policy can also be found on our website.



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