

damp and mould in your home

advice, prevention and when to contact Soha

Damp and mould can be unpleasant and, if left untreated, may damage your home and affect your health. This leaflet explains common causes, how to reduce condensation, how to clean minor mould safely, and when to report it to Soha.

why damp and mould happen

Condensation is the most common form and happens when warm, moist air meets cold surfaces (windows, external walls, corners, behind furniture or in cupboards). This can lead to water droplets and black spot mould.

Common sources of moisture are cooking or boiling kettles, showering or bathing, drying clothes indoors or breathing (especially overnight).

Penetrating damp (water coming in from outside) is often caused by leaking gutters/downpipes, missing roof tiles, cracks in external walls, or defective window/door seals. Damp patches may worsen after rain and not improve with ventilation alone.



urgent triggers: contact Soha if

- you suspect a leak, a burst pipe, overflow or any other persistent plumbing issue
- damp patches worsen after rain (possible water is getting in)
- mould is extensive, spreading, or returns quickly after cleaning
- a bedroom or main living area is affected
- you have no heating or your ventilation isn't working properly
- anyone in the home is vulnerable (children, older people, pregnancy or someone has asthma/respiratory or other long-term conditions)

how to tell us

Email: housing@soha.co.uk

Online: MySoha app or on the Soha website
www.soha.co.uk

If you don't use email, please call us.
Someone can contact us on your behalf if needed. **Our phone number** is 0800 014 15 45. This is a Freephone number.

Rising damp is less common and may cause tide marks or staining on lower walls, peeling paint, or salt deposits.

Plumbing leaks (water from inside the home). Leaks from pipes, radiators, showers, baths or appliances can cause persistent damp and mould.



Cleaning minor mould safely (small areas only)

For minor surface mould, you can usually clean it safely using an over-the-counter mould remover. Follow the product instructions and ventilate the room.

Do: ventilate (open windows where possible); wear gloves (and eye protection if recommended); keep children and pets away while cleaning; wipe and dry the area afterwards and dispose of cloths/sponges safely.

Don't: mix cleaning products (such as bleach + other cleaners) or dry-brush mould. Doing this can spread spores.

If mould is extensive, keeps returning, or you suspect a leak, please contact Soha.

Preventing condensation and mould

Ventilation: use extractor fans and leave them running for a period after bathing/cooking. Open windows for short periods daily to exchange moist air. Keep trickle vents open (if you have them) and avoid blocking vents. Keep internal doors closed while cooking/showering to reduce moisture spread.

Moisture: put lids on pans and use the extractor fan; avoid drying clothes indoors where possible; if you use a tumble dryer, ensure it is vented correctly and emptied if it's the condensor type.

Heating and airflow: keep a steady background temperature where possible; allow air to circulate and avoid pushing large furniture tight against external walls.

Dehumidifiers (optional): a dehumidifier can help reduce moisture, especially in colder months. It will not fix damp caused by leaks or water getting in. Empty and clean it regularly.

Things to avoid

Blocking or sealing vents or air bricks

Permanently **closing trickle vents**

Drying wet clothes on radiators without ventilation

Using **unflued portable gas heaters**. They add moisture to the air.

Ignoring persistent damp patches. Report them.

Translation services and alternative versions

We offer a translation service so please let us know if English is not your first language, and we will either provide a translator or issue you with a copy of the publication in your native language. We can also offer large print or audio versions of publications. Please contact us via the contact details on the front of this leaflet if you would like one of these services.

Your health

Damp and mould can affect people differently. If you are concerned about symptoms (like wheezing, coughing, asthma flare-ups or skin irritation), seek medical advice and tell Soha if anyone in the household is vulnerable.

What Soha will do

We will

- **Assess** the information and risk (including vulnerability)
- **Inspect** where appropriate
- **Identify** likely causes and agree next steps
- **Progress** remedial works where required
- **Keep a record** of actions and outcomes



Your five-minute checklist

- **Open** windows briefly each day (even in winter)
- Use **extractor fans** while cooking/ showering and for a period after
- Keep **trickle vents** open (if fitted)
- Keep **bathroom/kitchen doors** closed while creating steam
- Use **lids on pans**; **ventilate** when cooking
- Avoid **drying clothes on radiators** (or ventilate well if you must)
- Keep **furniture** slightly away from external walls
- Don't overfill **wardrobes or cupboards** as air needs to circulate
- **Report** leaks, rainwater getting in, or recurring mould to Soha

Do you need help?

If you are struggling with heating costs or managing ventilation, please contact us. Our contact details are on the front page. Someone can call us on your behalf if you prefer. We will communicate with you in the way that you prefer.

We can discuss practical support and signposting to relevant services.

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