

**DO YOU
HAVE
SIGNS OF DAMP AND
MOULD?**

Damp and mould

Advice for Portsmouth Homes tenants

Portsmouth City Council's council housing service

Homes in the UK can suffer from condensation and mould, especially in the winter.

Daily tasks such as cooking, showering and drying clothes result in moisture being released into the air, which can lead to condensation and black mould growth. Mould toxicity can negatively impact both your physical and mental wellbeing.

As your landlord, Portsmouth Homes is responsible for tackling damp and mould in your home. If black mould appears, we'll investigate the cause such as leaks, poor insulation, or ventilation, and carry out repairs to fix it.

If condensation is part of the problem, we'll work with you to find a solution and make sure your home meets the standards set out in the housing legislation.

Damp

There are two types of damp that can lead to the growth of black mould within a home. **Rising damp** is caused by ground water moving up through the wall or floor. This can be caused by a lack of effective damp proof course. **Penetrating damp** is caused by leaking water. This is usually caused by a structural problem in the building such as faulty guttering, or it can be caused by internal leaks, like pipes under the sink. This type of damp may expand across walls or a ceiling horizontally.



Black mould

Black mould is caused by a build-up of moisture. Left untreated this can spread from walls onto furniture, curtains and clothing. Black mould produces allergens, irritants, and sometimes toxic substances. Inhaling or touching mould spores may cause an allergic reaction such as sneezing, a runny nose, red eyes and a skin rash.



Condensation



Condensation is caused by moist air coming into contact with cold surfaces such as walls, windows and mirrors. It can also build up in places where there is little air movement, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. Condensation can cause dampness and mould within your home which can create a distinctive musty smell.

Keep kitchens and bathrooms clean

Kitchens and bathrooms are hotspots for condensation and therefore, mould as well. Keep on top of your cleaning routine to prevent the build-up of black mould in these rooms.



How to reduce condensation and prevent black mould growth



Use extractor fans and trickle vents in your windows. These don't lose much heat so keep them uncovered.



Open windows for short periods in the morning to release moisture from your home.



If you're drying clothes indoors, make sure there are open windows to allow moisture to escape.



Allow soft furnishings, such as sofas, room to breathe by pulling them away from the wall and not overfilling your wardrobe.

Heat your home



Condensation is less likely to form if the temperature of your home is above 15°C.



However, it's recommended that rooms are kept at between 18–21°C to keep you warm and healthy.



Don't turn thermostatic radiator valves off, always keep them on a minimum frost setting.

Energy saving advice

If you're struggling to afford your heating, help is available.

Call our freephone number **0800 260 5907**, or visit

switchedonportsmouth.co.uk

to receive free energy and financial advice, as well as onward referrals into larger schemes.

Try to keep your moisture levels down

Most daily tasks will release moisture into the air.

Activity	Litres of water vapour
Breathing – active adult	0.85 litres per day per person
Breathing – sleeping adult	0.3 litres per day per person
Cooking	Up to 3 litres per day
Washing clothes	0.5 litres per load
Drying clothes	5 litres per load
Showers and baths	1.5 litres per person
Washing dishes	Up to 1 litre per day
Un-flued gas heater	Up to 1 litre per hour of use

Tips to reduce moisture levels in your home

Try the below tips to reduce moisture levels and prevent condensation:

- Dry clothes outside or in a vented tumble dryer where possible
- Take shorter showers
- Add cold water first when running a bath – this reduces steam by up to 90%
- Keep a lid on pots and pans when cooking
- Wipe windows daily with a squeegee

Contacting us about damp and mould in your home

Reporting damp and mould to the council is the right thing to do, and the earlier this can be done, the easier it will be to resolve. Any signs of damp should be reported to the Housing repairs support team as soon as possible.

This can be done by calling or emailing using the below details, or online on the Portsmouth City Council website via the 'maintaining and repairing your council property' web page.

If you see black mould starting to appear in your home, do not ignore it. While small patches may be cleaned using a domestic mould and mildew remover, following the manufacturer's instructions carefully, this should only be a temporary measure.

If you have extreme black mould or the initial treatment is not effective, please contact the customer repairs team as this may be an indication of an underlying repair issue with your home such as damp or poor ventilation, which must be addressed by your landlord.

Do not try to remove with a brush or Hoover as this can lead to the mould spreading further round your home.

Customer repairs team contact details

 customerrepairsteam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

 023 9284 1311



You can request this information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 023 9284 1193