



Reducing Condensation in your home

Condensation is...

The air in your home is a mixture of two things; air and water vapour. On average a family produces 10 litres of moisture a day by cooking, bathing, washing dishes and doing laundry. Condensation is when the water vapour is converted into a liquid, which usually happens when the vapour cools. The temperature when the water vapour begins to condense is known as the dew point. Whenever warm, moist air comes into contact with a surface or object that is cold enough to chill the moisture in the air below its dew point is the process of condensation.

Condensation can occur in places where moisture it is not visible, such as the attic and exterior walls. Condensation on walls and ceilings may cause the paint to peel. Condensation that is not visible can lead to problems that could range from mould, mildew, stains on the walls and ceilings, to dry rot and the destruction of a wood frame structure.

Window Condensation

Windows tend to be the coldest surfaces in your home. Condensation forms on windows when the temperature of the glass is below the dew point of the air and the warm air that contacts it cools quickly. Similar to glass, metal is also a poor insulator and if the window has a metal frame, condensation also occurs on the frame. Condensation on windows can be reduced and/or eliminated by adding storm windows or installing multiple glazed windows.

The combination of indoor moisture, air-exchange rates and cold surfaces will determine how much condensation will occur at home. Short duration condensation can be caused by cooking, bathing or washing during cold weather. Moderate condensation is no cause for panic. Although, if the windows are persistently wet, or water stains appear on ceilings or walls, immediate action should be taken. The fastest and most effective way to deal with condensation is to increase the ventilation of the house (see the importance of ventilation for more details).