

Damp and mould inspection report

Further information and explanations.



This document is to help explain the technical words and descriptions you might find in a report following a damp and mould inspection in your home.

If you have any further questions, please contact us via our website www.irwellvalley.co.uk, or call us on **0300 561 1111**.

Condensation

Occurs when water vapour (moisture) in the air meets a cold surface like a window, tile, or outside wall. It occurs naturally in every home from cooking, washing dishes, laundry, even just breathing.

It's worse in the winter and will appear on cold surfaces and in places where there is little air circulation, like behind furniture or in the corner of rooms. Condensation that isn't dealt with will cause mould.



Damp

A build-up of moisture or water that has seeped into the structure of a building. It is caused by excess moisture that cannot escape from a home, and potential signs include peeling wallpaper, blistering paint, or mould.



Mould

A fungus that can grow on damp surfaces and spreads through invisible spores in the air. It can damage property and make people unwell if not treated.



Rising damp

Caused by water rising from the ground into the home. Water gets through or around a defective damp proof course (DPC) or passes through the brickwork. Rising damp only affects basements and ground floor rooms and often shows up as tide marks on the wall. It can be found all year round but will be more noticeable in winter.



Penetrating damp

Caused by water entering through external defects like damaged brickwork, missing roof tiles, or faulty pointing. It shows up as damp patches, especially after rain.



Water leaks

Caused by faulty or broken pipes (especially in bathrooms and kitchens) which lead to water escaping into walls and ceilings. The affected area looks and feels damp to the touch and stays damp regardless of the weather outside. It is fixed by completing the necessary repairs.



Water ingress

When water from outside gets into the home through something faulty in the make-up of the building such as roofing, gutters, walls and windows. This can lead to penetrating damp.



Trickle vent

A small vent built into window frames to allow air to flow continuously. They should be kept open to help reduce condensation.



Extractor fan

A ventilation device usually used in kitchens and bathrooms to remove moisture from the air to reduce condensation. These should be used during cooking and bathing and are not expensive to run, even when left on all the time in 'background' mode.



Positive Input Ventilation

(PIV) unit/fan

Similar to an extractor fan but working on a bigger scale, this unit improves the circulation of air by bringing filtered air into the home, helping to reduce moisture and condensation.



Humidity levels

relative humidity

This refers to how much moisture there is in the air of your home. When the air is very humid (a reading above 60%), it can lead to problems such as condensation, damp, and mould.



Dehumidifier

A device that removes moisture from the air to help manage humidity levels.



Ventilation/airflow

This is the process of letting fresh air into your home. When you circulate fresh air through the home, it removes moist air and reduces humidity. Good ventilation helps prevent condensation, damp, and mould in your home.



Surface temperature

This is how warm or cold a surface (like a wall, window, or floor) feels. If the surface is cold and the air is humid, moisture can settle on it and cause condensation.



Air temperature

This is the temperature of the air inside your home. Warmer air can hold more moisture, while cooler air holds less. A steady air temperature of between 18 and 21 degrees helps reduce condensation.



Background

Maintaining consistent low-level background heating throughout the day to prevent cold surfaces and reduce condensation risk.



Dewpoint

The temperature at which moisture in the air turns into water (condensation). If a surface in your home is colder than the dewpoint, condensation will form on it.



Mould wash

A fungicidal treatment that removes mould across a variety of surfaces including tiles, wood, and walls. It kills all fungus and can stop mould returning.



Damp Proof Course (DPC)

A barrier (usually in walls) designed to prevent rising damp. If faulty or missing, moisture can travel upwards from the ground.



Category 1:

This refers to serious cases of damp or mould, where there is mould covering more than 2 square metres (roughly the size of a single mattress) on a wall or ceiling. It is usually caused by severe condensation, poor ventilation, or a major issue like a leak or damage to the building's structure or insulation.



Category 2:

This is where an area in a bathroom or kitchen is affected usually caused by minor water ingress or high levels of condensation on cold areas.



Category 3:

This is where there is a small amount of mould around a window frame/ledge, an external door or around bathing facilities and sinks, which is usually caused by minor condensation.



Making our communications more accessible

If you need this information in a different language or format look for this icon  in the bottom left of the screen to open the accessibility tool. You can then translate; change the font; alter the colour contrast or have the content read aloud.