



As the nights start drawing in and the weather turns colder we would like to remind you of your responsibility to take the necessary precautions to ensure your property is kept in best condition over the winter months.

PREVENTION OF FROST DAMAGE



Now that the weather is turning colder, we wish to remind you that it is your responsibility to take all necessary precautions to prevent the freezing and bursting of water pipes. If you are going away and leaving the property empty, this would mean leaving the heating on 'continuous' at a temperature of between 12/15°C (55/60°F) and the trap door of the loft slightly open.

Should you be away for any length of time, the heating system should be drained down at your own expense. For this service please contact us so that arrangements can be made.

We would also like to remind you that if you have an outside tap, it should be drained down for the winter. If you have a separate stopcock leading to the outside tap (normally found under the sink) please turn it off, then open up the tap outside to drain off. If you have a dripping overflow pipe, please inform us immediately as the drip may freeze and the cold water tank in the loft may overflow and flood the property.

We are anxious to save our tenants and landlords possible costly damage. In a recent case, where adequate precautions were not taken, there was a resultant damage in excess of £20,000 in a property where pipes had frozen and then burst causing extensive flooding. It is for this reason that we are asking you for your kind cooperation.

DEALING WITH MOULD GROWTH



Dampness from condensation often causes the growth of black mould on walls, window frames and other cold surfaces such as tiles. Mould and mildew can also grow on furnishings, curtains and even clothes in wardrobes. It may first appear in corners or behind cupboards, but it can spread across entire walls. Mould can spoil wallpaper and furnishings and can make your home unhealthy. Mould on washable surfaces can be removed by wiping down with detergents or proprietary mould removers.

CONDENSATION

The air we breathe can hold varying amounts of water vapour, depending on its temperature. If warm moist air is cooled by a cold surface, such as a window or external wall, it is then no longer able to hold the same amount of water vapour. The airborne moisture turns into droplets of water and collects on the cold surface. This is called condensation.

Every home gets condensation at some time usually when lots of moisture and steam are being produced for example, during a shower, when a meal is being cooked or when wet clothes are being dried. It is quite normal to find your bedroom windows misted up in the morning after a cold night. There is nothing much you can do to stop this. However, if your home never seems to be free from condensation, this guide sheet will help you sort out the problem.

To deal with a condensation problem effectively, the following steps need to be followed

1. Cooking

- Cover pans when you're cooking.
- Don't leave kettles and pans boiling longer than necessary.
- Make sure your kitchen is well ventilated so the water vapour can escape outside; if condensation is beginning to form when cooking open the kitchen window.

2. Drying Clothes

- Hang washing outside to dry whenever you can.
- If you have to use a tumble dryer make sure it's vented to the outside of the property.
- If you have to dry washing indoors use the bath room and keep the door shut and the room well ventilated.
- Do not hang wet washing on radiators all round your home doing so is very likely to cause condensation problems.

3. Bathing

- Keep the bathroom door shut and the room well ventilated when using it.
- After use open the bathroom door to allow moisture to circulate.

4. Unused rooms

- If rooms are not being used and are not being heated it's a good idea to keep their doors shut.

5. Ventilate your home

One of the most efficient ways of removing water vapour is to provide adequate ventilation.

- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes. Avoid putting too many objects in them as it stops the air circulating. Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls rather than an outside wall. If against an outside wall try and put a barrier between wall and furniture, e.g. bubble wrap or similar
- Keep a small window ajar, or a trickle vent open, in each occupied room to give background ventilation
- Windows near the ceiling are more effective at letting water vapour out than ones lower down.

6. Keep your home warm

- Your home needs to be heated via 'dry heat', such as central heating or gas fires, not paraffin or portable gas heaters.
- The best approach to heating in order to reduce condensation, is to heat your home at a low level for a longer period of time.
- Keep the heating on, but set it to provide just a minimum of background heating. This will warm the whole building up and keep it warm, so there are no cold surfaces which will attract condensation.



NOT FORGETTING THE GARDEN

Outside your property ensure gutters are cleared of falling leaves to avoid blockages and please sweep up the leaves in the garden and prune shrubs etc. in line with your tenancy agreement.

If you have any questions with any of the above or want more advice on looking after your property over winter please call your Lettings team and we will be happy to assist you further.