

CORNWALL  
HOUSING

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# Damp, mould and condensation myth buster

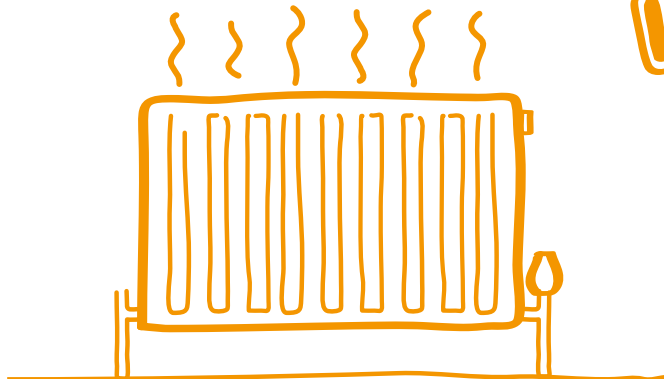
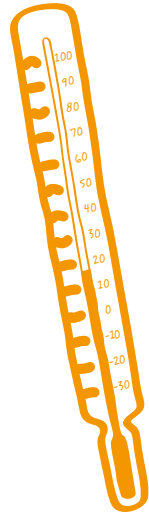
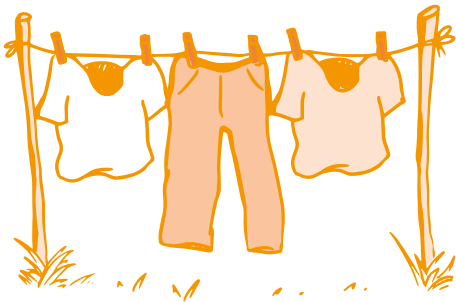


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**This myth buster** aims to address some of the confusion around:

- **Damp**
- **Mould**
- **Condensation**
- **Positive input ventilation systems**
- **Extractor fans**



# What is damp?

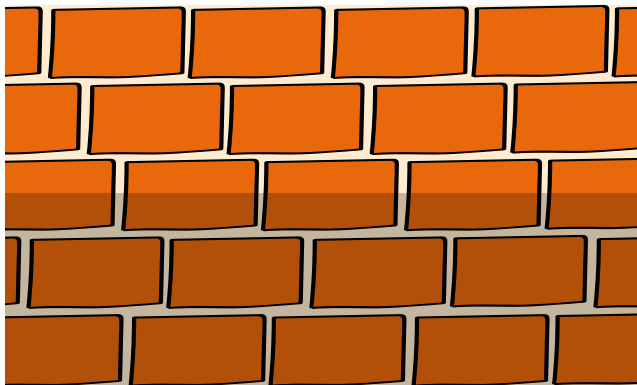
Damp is a build-up of moisture in the building's structure. There are two types of damp: Penetrating damp and rising damp.

## Myth: “Condensation causes penetrating damp and rising damp.”

This is not true. Penetrating damp and rising damp are different from condensation:

- **Penetrating damp** is when moisture enters the house through a defect in the outside walls or roof. For example, a leaking pipe, or blocked gutters. This type of damp can leave a tide mark, where the moisture has reached through the fabric of the building.
- **Rising damp** is when water from the ground enters the home through either a defective damp course, or no damp course. Sometimes this can be recognised from ground salts left behind on walls and plaster.

It is not your responsibility to identify what type of damp you have. However, it is your responsibility to contact us so we can arrange for a surveyor to visit and inspect your home if needed.



# What is mould?

Mould is a form of fungus that grows in damp and humid conditions. It varies in appearance, with a cloudy look, or black patches of mould spores. It is common to find mould growing in homes, as homes produce moisture and warm air. They also provide areas for mould to develop, such as wallpaper, furniture, clothes and walls. Whilst mould is common, it is important to tackle as it can cause harm to your health.

## **Myth: “I cannot report mould issues to Cornwall Housing.”**

This is not true. We take damp, mould and condensation issues seriously, and we have set up a specialist team to deal with these issues. Please contact us to report any concerns. We will ask you some questions over the phone and decide the best course of action.

## **Myth: “Mould can be left, and it will not cause any problems to my home or health.”**

This is not true. Mould can cause health-related illnesses, and people with existing respiratory conditions could be affected. The sooner you report mould to us, the sooner we can help deal with it.

## **Myth: “I can wash mould and kill the spores with bleach.”**

Many people use bleach to wash away mould in their homes. However, bleach does not always kill the bacteria even though the surface appears clean, and the mould often grows back. Using a mould treatment product is more effective in killing mould.

## **Myth: “Mould is always visible.”**

This is not true. Mould can grow in areas that are not always noticeable, such as behind wardrobes, or behind furniture that is pushed up against walls. If you smell a damp, musty odour, then mould could be present.

# What is condensation?

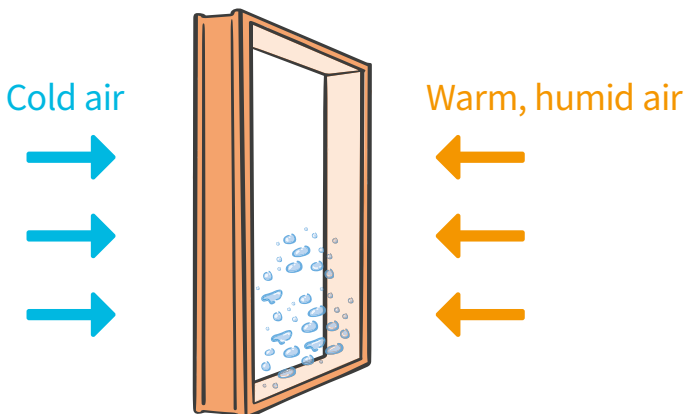
Condensation is created when moisture in the air comes into contact with a cold surface, like a window or a cold wall. The air moisture then forms into droplets of water.

## Myth: “I cannot report condensation or get advice from Cornwall Housing.”

This is not true. We want to know if you are experiencing problems. We have a dedicated team that deal with issues of damp, mould and condensation. If you contact us, we will ask you some questions and decide the best course of action.

## Myth: “Condensation does not cause any problems in my home.”

A build-up of condensation in your home will cause excess moisture in the air. When the moisture comes into contact with cold surfaces like windows or walls, it will form into water droplets. This process causes damp areas and can develop into mould. To help reduce condensation in your home, open windows when using the tumble dryer, cooking, or after bathing, put lids on saucepans, and use extractor fans.

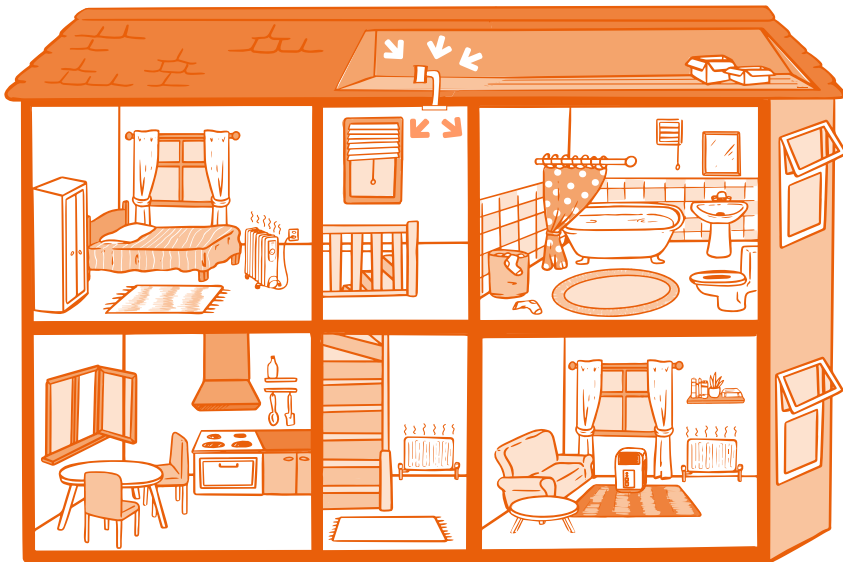


# What is a Positive Input Ventilation System?

Positive Input Ventilation Systems are an energy efficient method of ventilating homes. They draw warm air out of the loft and pump it around the property.

## Concern: “They will cost me a lot of money to run.”

These types of ventilation systems are estimated to cost around 22p a day. This may sound expensive, but these systems can help move warm air that sits below the ceilings of your home. This can save you around 10% of your heating costs per year.



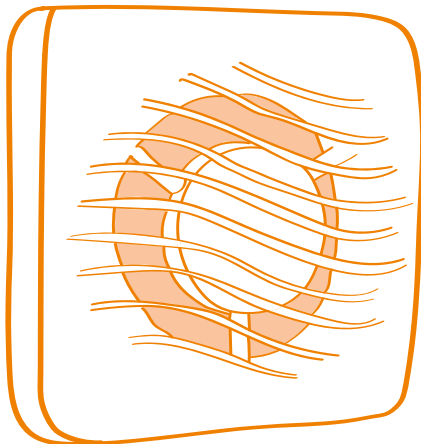
# What is an extractor fan?

Extractor fans are part of the homes' ventilation system. They are important as they keep air moving in a particular area or room and prevent excess moisture from building up in the home. Extractor fans are most likely to be located in a kitchen or bathroom.

## **Concern: "Running an extractor fan is going to cost me a lot of money over the winter."**

We have estimated below the approximate yearly prices for each type of extractor fan in Cornwall Housing homes. However, prices will vary depending on how much moisture is in the room of the extractor fan:

- **Humidity extractor fans** (fitted in your home within the last 5 years) - £3.68 per year.
- **Humidistat extractor fan** in the **bathroom** - £3.68 per year.
- **Humidistat extractor fan** in the **kitchen** - £9.81 per year.
- **Older style extractor fans** (that run until the light goes off in the room) - £9.81 per year.



## **If you follow the advice in this leaflet**

you should begin to notice a considerable improvement within four to six weeks.

However, if the problem continues, it may be due to another problem. In this case, ring us on **0300 1234 161** or send an email to **info@cornwallhousing.org.uk** to arrange for us to carry out a damp inspection.

If you would like this information in another format or language, please contact:  
Cornwall Housing Ltd, Chy Tревail, Beacon Technology Park, Bodmin, PL31 2FR

**Email:** [info@cornwallhousing.org.uk](mailto:info@cornwallhousing.org.uk)

**Web:** [www.cornwallhousing.org.uk](http://www.cornwallhousing.org.uk)

**Tel:** 0300 1234 161



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