



Mould - Prevention and Treatment

What is mould?

Mould is a type of fungi which must have a food source to grow. The food source is moisture plus dust, dirt or organic matter. Mould comes in many colours and varieties but the most common types are not hazardous to humans; however some moulds which may be found inside your home could cause health problems depending on the type of mould, exposure time and your general health. For more info on health effects, consult your doctor.

Moulds may smell musty and can grow virtually anywhere, indoors and outdoors, in and on materials such as food, furniture, fabrics, carpets, walls, paper, timber and plumbing.

Who is responsible?

Housing Plus will make sure there is no mould in your home before you move in. After a new tenancy begins the tenant is then responsible for the prevention and treatment of mould in their home. If you fail to control mould growth in your home and then seek our assistance to remove it, you will be charged for the cost of the work.

Controlling mould growth

Controlling condensation, ventilation and temperature are the most effective ways to control mould.

Condensation

When water is heated it changes into vapour. Condensation occurs when vapour cools and changes back into liquid. When the air is already moist, condensation occurs with the slightest drop in temperature. Avoid conditions encouraging mould growth by using heat, insulation and ventilation.

Ventilation

Moisture and humidity levels are required to support mould growth. The cheapest and easiest way of reducing moisture and humidity levels is by ventilating a room by opening a window or door. All areas of the house should be continuously ventilated where possible.

The most effective method of reducing moisture is to use exhaust fans in areas where water vapour is created. There must be enough ventilation for an adequate intake of fresh air to replace the moist air.

Heating

Condensation and mould growth can be reduced by providing a continuous low level of dry heat. Continuous, even heating will allow warmth to penetrate the walls and ceilings. On cool days try to keep the inside temperature at least 5°C higher than the outside temperature.

How to reduce mould growth

Bathroom: Open a window or door or use an exhaust fan when having a shower or bath to control air moisture clean and dry surfaces that get wet regularly.

Laundry: Reduce air moisture by:

- + Hanging wet clothes outdoors



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- + Opening a window when using a clothes drier or venting the drier outside
- + Opening a window or door when using hot water

Kitchen

Reduce moisture/humidity levels by:

- + Using an exhaust fan or opening a window when cooking
- + Using lids on pots and saucepans
- + Checking plumbing for leaks

Family/Lounge room

Reduce air moisture from kerosene heaters or un-flued gas heaters by:

- + Opening curtains and blinds during the day
- + Opening windows and doors when possible
- + Switching to an electric or flued gas heater

Storage space

- + Dispose of any wet, badly damaged or musty smelling items
- + Store dry items in sealed plastic containers
- + Maintain good air movement in storage areas

General

Keep windows and walls dry inside the home by:

- + Ventilating rooms with open windows or doors or by using extractor fans
- + Wiping away condensation
- + Heating rooms with dry heat

Cupboards and bedrooms

- + Open blinds and curtains to warm rooms with sunlight
- + Ensure clothes and shoes are dry before being put away
- + Keep cupboards and bedrooms uncluttered and well ventilated

Outdoors

- + Divert water drainage away from house walls by landscaping and paving
- + Clean gutters to prevent back flow of storm water
- + Change topsoil in pot plants if mould appears
- + Manage composting correctly

Mould should be removed as soon as it appears with a mould solution or vinegar.

Completely eliminating mould and its causes can take some persistence.



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