

PESTS

Pests such as rodents and insects are attracted into properties because food is left available and / or the property is not being properly cleaned. This is generally a problem caused by tenants not keeping their accommodation clean and tidy and often is not the responsibility of the landlord.

MICE & RATS (Rodents)

Finding mice in your home can be very distressing. Rodents can spread disease in their search for food and shelter, posing health risks particularly in kitchens and food storage areas. Rodents can cause other problems, so taking action to eliminate an infestation quickly is important as they can contaminate foodstuffs as pathogens in their urine & faeces can transmit diseases.



Following the pest prevention steps at the bottom of this page can help, but in most cases professional help is needed.

BED BUGS

If you think you have bed bugs in your house, the only thing on your mind will be getting rid of them as quickly as possible. Bed bugs stay close to a food source, so are found where people tend to rest and sleep, hence the name bed bug. The frustration they can cause is not only due to the emotional stress of dealing with parasites, but also the irritation of their bites and the potential for secondary infection from constant scratching.



Whilst there are do-it-yourself treatments for bed bug removal it may be necessary to call in a professional company for severe infestations. If you suffer from itchy bite marks on your body consult your GP.

ANTS

The ant species found in the UK can be a nuisance when they get into your home. Garden or black ants aren't thought to carry diseases, the trouble is you don't know where they've been foraging outside, so you won't want them marching through your food cupboards.



- Clear up any sticky residues on worktops and tables, because most ants are attracted to 'sweet things'
- Cover up, put away or securely seal any foodstuffs which could be a source of sustenance for ants.

Many 'off the shelf' ant killers are available from supermarket and DIY stores, but the most effective are the bait traps. These are charged with poison that is taken back to the nest by the workers and kills the whole colony. Always follow the instructions.

SLUGS

Use a torch/flashlight in a darkened room to spot the dried trails from last night's invasion then follow them back to any entry points. Check for joints, holes and gaps along walls, around doors, pipes, vents and under cabinets. Placing salt around these entrances will discourage slugs. Ask your landlord to seal gaps using expanding foam for larger gaps or silicone sealant for smaller cracks.



WASPS

Wasps are most active in the warmer summer months. In the UK and cause annoyance and painful stings.



Wasps nest need to be dealt with by professionals, so if you have one, talk to your landlord.

TRY PEST PREVENTION FIRST - REMOVE SOURCES OF FOOD, WATER & SHELTER

- Store food in sealed plastic or glass containers. Garbage containing food scraps should be placed in tightly covered trash cans. Remove garbage regularly from your home.
- Don't let water accumulate anywhere in the home. Don't let water collect in trays under your house plants or refrigerator. Don't leave pet food and water out overnight.
- Clutter provides places for pests to breed and hide and makes it hard to get rid of them. Get rid of things like stacks of newspapers, magazines, or cardboard.



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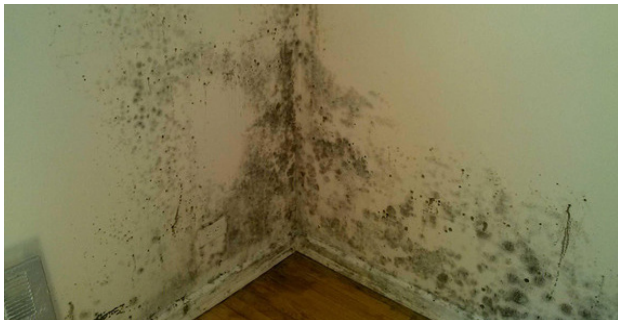
CONDENSATION & MOULD

In the vast majority of cases mould occurs because tenants do not ventilate properties and allow an avoidable build up of moisture. Follow the advice below to avoid this.

What is condensation?

When it occurs and common causes

Condensation forms when warm, moist air comes into contact with cold surfaces such as windows, floors or walls. Condensation occurs mostly during periods of cold weather and can damage decorations, floor covering, clothes and bedding.



Given time, the affected damp areas then attract black mould that grows on the surface. Moisture from kitchens and bathrooms is a major cause and affects other colder parts of the property. Common causes include too much moisture being produced in your home, not enough ventilation and the temperature in your home not being kept on to an even level temperature. Condensation can be reduced by increasing ventilation and reducing the amount of moisture in the air.

Did you know...?

- Cooking and use of the kettle produces 3 litres of moisture per day
- Having a bath or shower produces 1 litre of moisture
- Washing and drying clothes indoors produces 5.5 litres of moisture per day



You can reduce the build up of condensation in your home and lessen its affects by following these simple tips:

- Do not dry washing on radiators
- Dry laundry outside, if that's not possible, use the bathroom with the window open
- Properly vent tumble dryers
- Cover pans and switch off kettles as soon as they have boiled to minimise steam
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors to prevent moisture escaping when cooking or bathing
- Maintain low-level heating such as turning radiators to a frost setting in rooms likely to be unoccupied for prolonged periods of time. Do not use portable gas heaters as they produce very high levels of condensation and are contrary to your Conditions of Tenancy
- Do not block air vents
- Use extractor fans, where provided, when cooking and bathing
- Wipe condensation from windows on a daily basis
- Run cold water first then add the hot water when having a bath, this reduces condensation by up to 90%
- Ventilate rooms daily for at least 30 minutes or use your window vents for long periods
- Keep furniture from direct contact with external walls to prevent dampness occurring



REPAIR WORK DUE TO DAMPNESS CREATED BY YOUR OWN ACTIONS MAY BE CHARGED AS A BREACH OF YOUR CONDITIONS OF TENANCY.



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