



Remora Cleaning LTD



Mould, leaks, and emergencies!



Mould Primer

1. Mould is a factor of moisture/humidity. When relative humidity (moisture in air) is <60% mould can then grow. This can be caused by condensation, or a leak/damp.
2. There are a number of different mould types, most of which can exacerbate asthma. The two most hazardous are stachybotrys (type of black mould, respiratory problems), and cladosporium (green/black colour, irritant).
3. Mould is found everywhere and does not in itself present a health hazard, with the exception being stachybotrys to children, the immunosuppressed, or people with respiratory illnesses.
4. If mould growth is around windows and in corners, it is likely to be due to condensation. If bunched in a specific area in the open or concentrated, it may be evidence of a leak/damp.



Restricted airflow,
high humidity, no
ventilation
condensation
causing
aureobasidium.

Typical light mould
growth caused by
modern construction
type and weak
ventilation.
Stachybotrys but so
minor does not
present a hazard.



Mould - key points for property managers

1. Most mould does not represent a health hazard, unless to young children.
2. Treatment options:
 - a. The property should be quickly inspected by a technician who can assess likely causes and provide a written report - this provides firm data and solutions, and is usually effective at reassuring tenants and preventing conflict.
 - b. Installing ventilation measures such as powered extractors are the likely solution in most cases, as well as changes to tenant behaviour.
 - c. Cleaning can be a short term measure, but will not prevent recurrence and as such the main objective is to lower humidity in the property, by improving ventilation.
 - d. Drying with a dehumidifier will lower RH to >60% and as such stops mould spores growing and provides a temporary solution in an emergency, but is not a permanent solution.
 - e. Mould resistant paints and products do provide some resistance, but do not address the root cause, and are probably only useful in a property where condensation is a result of design flaws (inadequate ventilation).
3. Legals:
 - a. Mould can be a hazard under the housing act 2004, and is also covered under landlord's obligations under section 11 of the landlord and tenant act 1985.
 - b. 'Awaabs Law' is currently in consultation, requiring landlords to investigate hazards within 14 days, repairs within 7 days, and make emergency repairs within 24 hours. This is expected to become law in late 2024.

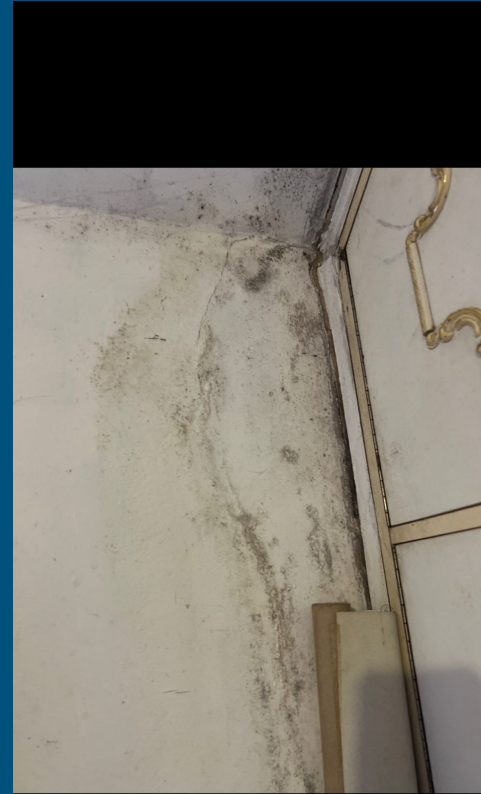
Condensation

1. Condensation is when moisture in the air typically either hits a wall/window where it's colder than the ambient temperature, and condenses into moisture on that surface; or where there is poor airflow (ie. back of cupboards).
2. Contributing factors include:
 - a. Moisture generation in a property (cooking, bathing, hanging laundry are typical offenders), a large amount of people living in a small property.
 - b. Lack of ventilation, especially in modern buildings that are highly efficient.
3. Who's at fault? If humidity is high, but no leak, and adequate ventilation then residents should adjust their usage of the property; but usually upgrades to ventilation are possible which are cheap and can prevent conflict:
 - a. Airbricks, trickle vents.
 - b. Powered extractors, slaved to humidity meters or lights with a delay/timer.
4. Typically, reducing moisture generation, improving ventilation and airflow will resolve this quickly and easily.

No ventilation in
bathroom, relying on
TT's to open the window
when using the shower.



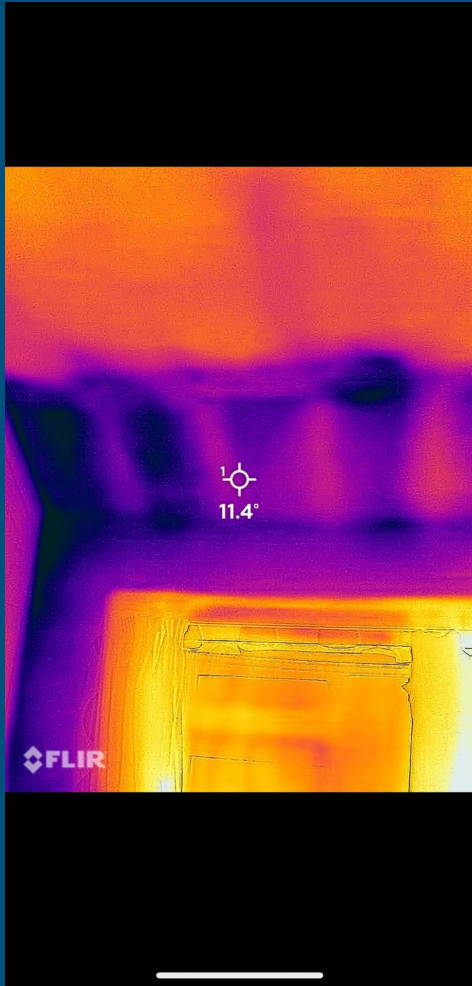
In extreme cases,
unmanaged condensation
can cause damage, and
looks like penetrating
damp.



Damp/Water Damage terminology

1. Damp literally means excess moisture in a property, whether through condensation, or moisture ingress from outside/inside.
2. Penetrating damp is when moisture is getting in from the outside. Usually this is caused by poor maintenance to walls, guttering and roofing.
3. Rising damp is very rare and is often misdiagnosed. This is when moisture from the groundwater table is sucked up through the walls. Any house built after 1966 should have a 'damp course', protection against this. A salts/nitrates test is the only firm way to diagnose this (testing for salts in the moisture to identify groundwater).
4. Damp, unlike condensation, should be dried out with a dehumidifier by a specialist immediately to mitigate ongoing water damage as part of a damage management plan.

Overflowing guttering has led to fascia's being saturated and penetrating damp to ceiling.



Poor maintenance over years will lead to water getting in and causing damage.



Damp - key points for property managers

1. Fast action is key - water damage worsens with time as materials become saturated. Identifying and repairing the root cause is essential early on.
2. Appointing a British Damage Management Association or equivalent technician to do a report will provide a plan of action, while managing costs. Builders cannot typically do this sort of work on their own:
 - a. Moisture readings and thermal/visual assessments determine current damage levels.
 - b. Drying/strip out is started, with readings establishing a 'moving average', and target end result.
 - c. Then reinstatement can go ahead.
3. If in doubt, check the guttering! More than 70% of penetrating damp we investigate is down to blockages.
4. Poor maintenance is not typically covered by landlord's building insurance, unless it is the responsibility of the freeholder.

Leaks/Sewage

1. Leaks/escape of water are when a water or sewage pipe bursts or clogs/backs up. Either:
 - a. White-water (clean supply)
 - b. Grey-water (clean supply mixed with household materials)
 - c. Black-water (sewage).
 - d. The last 2 are biohazards and must be treated differently, techs wear respirators and full PPE.
2. The typical process is to remove surface water, take moisture readings to determine saturation of materials (floors, plasterboard), and then strip out and dry before reinstating.
 - a. For grey/blackwater this may involve removal of solids, then sanitising affected areas and the use of enzyme cleaner to remove odours. An ATP test should be performed to confirm bacteria has been removed.
 - b. If plasterboard and woodwork gets saturated, it will need to be replaced in almost all cases.
 - c. A lack of drying before reinstatement will lead to long term damp/mould problems and it's crucial to dry out affected areas properly, as quickly as possible.

Next slide is a bit grim, can skip if you like!



Sewage back-up: fairly extreme case in 40 bathrooms at an accommodation block.

Once this was unblocked we removed solids, wet vac to remove liquid, sanitising and disinfecting the remaining areas.

Tiles, if sealant intact, may provide a barrier to absorption.

ATP testing shows bacteria is at safe levels for repairs/reinstatement works to be carried out.



Post white-water leak damage to plasterboard. Visibly saturated. In a case like this we would remove the skirting and flooring would likely come up.

By not stripping out, long term issues will occur - landlords may not want to do this but it is essential.

Quick drying here would prevent damage from progressing to other areas, and stop further issues.



Leaks/Sewage - key points for property managers

1. The most important initial factor is: is this clean water, or is there a contaminant?
 - a. Black-water contaminants contain high risks of illnesses including hepatitis A/B and e-coli. Residents should not continue to access affected areas.
 - b. ATP testing provides evidence of safe conditions for residents.
2. Once decontaminated (if required):
 - a. Strip-out, minimising impact to residents.
 - b. Drying.
 - c. Reinstatement.
 - d. Key aims are: cost-management, minimising disruption/maximising continuity (for example allowing residents to use a w/c, kitchen), and a fast turnaround.
3. Mould post leaks:
 - a. Mould growth following a leak is quite common, but will usually be prevented by quick drying.
 - b. Mould can be cleaned off where visible using emulsifiers once drying is in place.

Trauma Cleaning - Primer

1. Trauma cleaning includes injury/death, undiscovered death, and hazardous clearances including needles/sharps, hoarder and squat clearance.
2. Blood and sharps carry high risk pathogens including hepatitis and HIV. Blood and decomposing matter can also present serious health risks. Nobody should enter the property without protective equipment.
3. Sensitive and considerate engagement with relatives and stakeholders is crucial in what can be a distressing time. Preservation of personal property.
4. Carried out by trained technicians in a 3 step process, designed to minimise cost and efficiently return properties to a rentable/saleable state:
 - a. Decontamination - sanitising affected areas, removing hazardous materials, and returning the property to a safe condition where workmen can enter.
 - i. A reputable contractor should provide consignment notes for the disposal of hazardous waste
 - b. Clearance/strip out - we then carry out a clearance once the property is safe to enter.
 - c. Re-fit - redecoration and replacement of affected materials such as flooring
 - d. Clean - we can then carry out a deep clean to return the property to rentable/saleable condition.

I've left unpleasant images out mercifully, but happy to share details of previous jobs.



Trauma cleans - the process

1. Put on PPE - respirators, hazmat suits, boot, gloves. Check each other's kit.
2. Establish a safe zone inside the property with plastic sheeting for equipment and waste bags.
3. Pest control - kill flies and insects that may be present and remove these.
4. Sanitise affected areas.
5. Cut up and remove in hazardous waste sacks affected areas such as carpets, underlay, wooden flooring and furniture (These are incinerated as medical waste).
6. Neutralising biohazards such as blood splatter and other waste throughout the property as we work through, 1sq meter at a time.
7. Odour neutralisation using enzyme cleaner and ozone machines to kill bacteria.
8. Site hand over to cleaning/waste removal team.

Costs and Timings

Damp/Mould inspections - £270 + vat, 24 hour turnaround.

Sewage/leak jobs - from £250 + vat.

Drying - from £40 + vat per day, depending on machine type and set up.

Trauma cleans - from £500 + vat, plus waste removal.

Deep cleans - from £200 + vat.

Attendance within 48 hours.

Attendance within 24 hours, or within 2 hours for emergencies.

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Attendance within 24 hours, or within 2 hours for emergencies.

Attendance within 48 hours.

Contact Information

We are happy to provide free immediate guidance and advice, and can do this over the phone having looked at photos and videos - just whatsapp to 07743 963247 and I will let you know what I think needs to be done.

Our technicians are BDMA, PCA, and NACSC trained and we are doing all of the mentioned jobs weekly at least, so we have likely seen it before.

In office hours please call us on 0207 8218852, or email bookings@remoracleaning.com.

Out of hours please call my mobile on 07743963247.

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02078218852 / 07743963247 out of hours.