

Reducing Condensation

Keep The Water Out

How to reduce the amount of condensation on your windows



Have you noticed condensation dripping down the insides of your windows in the winter? If so, you're not alone. "The most frequently asked questions we get from homeowners is, 'What's causing the condensation on my windows?'" says David Mitten, the executive director of the Siding and Window Dealers Association of Canada.

Over the past thirty years, many improvements have been made in the way houses are sealed and insulated. As a result, there are fewer exchanges of inside and outside air.

This increases the level of relative humidity inside our homes. And, during the winter months, high humidity level homes often cause water to condense on cold window panes.

"It's just like when you put ice into a drink," explains Mitten. "After a few minutes, you'll notice the outside of the glass is covered in water droplets. Condensation always forms on a cold surface. So the key is to warm up the inside of your windows. The colder the outside of the window gets, the less relative humidity you can have indoors and still have dry windows."

Mittens says there are two things you can do to remedy a condensation problem:

1. Install new windows that are more energy efficient, and will fit tighter and have warmer glazing than your existing windows
2. Reduce the relative humidity in your house by:
 - Allowing dryer, outside air to enter through a slightly open window, which increases ventilation.
 - Turning down your humidifier, should you have one, cutting down on major sources of water vapor in the home (ex. cooking, washing, and bathing).
 - Buying a heat recovering ventilation unit.

To test the relative humidity in your home, buy an inexpensive humidity gauge at your local hardware store. A chart is available from SAWDAC (www.sawdac.com) to help you interpret the results based on the temperature outside.

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