How to Reduce Excessive Humidity in Your Home

That water on the inside of your home’s windows in winter time is called condensation. If you are seeing condensation on the windows, chances are there’s also condensation on your walls, leading to the potential of mold and mildew as well as rotting of the wooden window frame. The condensation comes from moisture in the air as it hits the cold surface of the window or wall. Read on to learn some cost-effective steps you can take to reduce and get rid of window condensation.

Humidity: How Much Is Too Much, How Much is Too Little?

Experts have developed rules of thumb to help homeowners make decisions regarding humidity levels in their house. The limits should be used as guides only. Acceptable or comfortable humidity levels will actually vary from season to season, from house to house, and even between rooms in the same house.

Rules of Thumb

To prevent window condensation during the heating season, the recommended indoor RH is 30 per cent to 50 per cent. When it is below -10°C (14°F) outdoors, recommended indoor RH is 30 per cent.

To understand what is happening we need to look at some basic environmental science.

- Cool air is able to hold less moisture than warm air. Therefore, when the warm, moist air inside the house comes into contact with the cool glass surface, some water vapor that can no longer be held by the cooled air is deposited on the glass. The point on which the water condenses is called the "Dew Point". If it is the inside face of the glass - you want to change that.

- If you can have more warm air flowing across the inside face of the window this will keep the water from condensing on its surface. Do not have drapes or blinds closed on your window - they will impede the flow of warm air.

- Don’t lower the inside temperature of your home too low. Colder air cannot hold the moisture and it will condense on your windows.

- Turn on your bathroom fans when you are running water, showering or bathing. Turn on your kitchen fan when you are boiling water in the kitchen.
On days when the temperature is not too cold - open a window and turn a fan on. This will draw dry air from the outside in and push the moist air out.

Consider installing ceiling fans in large open areas - this will push the warm air back down and across any large windows.

Wipe off any moisture before the water leaks down inside your walls and causes mold. Eventually you will find a balance between comfortable humidity levels and too much moisture on your windows. Buy a hygrometer and try to keep your humidity levels around 35-40 during the winter months. (Hygrometers are instruments used for measuring humidity)

Instructions

1. Circulate air by using exhaust vents or fans to reduce condensation. The laundry room, bathrooms and kitchen should have vented exhaust fans. Also, open doors and windows when possible to ventilate your house.

2. Check your roof at least twice a year. Look for the cracks, breaks and punctures. Also take a look rain gutters, downspouts and extensions for leaks.

3. Inspect doors, windows, basement; foundations for any water seepage or damage. Immediately replace or repair worn, damaged caulk, weather stripping, window seals, door seals, and glazing. Select building or renovating materials designed to minimize moisture and condensation.

4. With these simple steps can help your home from moisture damage, eliminate allergens and mold.