



# Dealing with Condensation

## What causes condensation?

- Too much moisture or steam from bathing and kitchen activities.
- Not enough ventilation or air circulation.
- Cold surfaces.
- Your unit's temperature.

There is always moisture in the air. When warm air cools, the moisture can appear as tiny droplets of water on cold surfaces. As the weather gets colder, this moisture appears in our homes as water droplets on our windows.

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If you don't work to prevent and manage condensation in your unit, it may:

- Cause unhealthy mold growth on walls, window sills, and furniture.
- Water to pool and damage the wood window sills.
- Drip and pool onto floors and cause damage.

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## Preventing and managing condensation:

- Set your unit's humidistat control dial to between 40% to 50% relative humidity.
- Run your bathroom fan for at least 20 minutes after showering or bathing.
- Turn on your kitchen fan while cooking and keep it running for a while after.
- Keep blinds and curtains open during the day. For better results, lift blinds fully open, instead of just opening the slats.
- Even when your blinds are closed, always leave a gap between the blinds and window sill to promote air circulation.
- Don't let water sit on window sills; mop up the water and keep sills dry.
- Avoid hanging laundry indoors to dry and remove lint after each dryer cycle.
- Open your windows whenever possible—even on rainy days for short period of time—to improve air quality and circulation within your unit.

**Do not** leave rags or towels on your window sills or in the tracks to soak up the water; this worsens the problem because the water recirculates into the air and you risk mold build up.

For more information & tips, read this complete fact sheet available on PQ Online and outside the Pacifica office.

## Background

During cold winter days, have you noticed water droplets on the inside surface of your windows or sliding glass doors? Do you have water pooling on your window sills and in the tracks?

This water is due to the presence of excessive moisture in the air within your unit, which eventually condenses, or becomes solid water droplets on cold windows. The presence of water on the vertical glass window or door surfaces, metal frames and/or metal tracks below—without any indication of moisture entry on the adjacent ceiling or wall areas—is a good indication that the problem is due to condensation, not exterior water ingress. This water, if not removed promptly and properly, may cause considerable damage to your unit and our buildings by:

- rotting your wood window sills
- causing windows to separate from the window sills
- water dripping inside walls or pooling onto floors

Excessive moisture in the air may also encourage mold growth which could give rise to breathing difficulties and other health problems.

Each unit in Pacifica is equipped with a humidistat, a device that controls relative humidity by removing excess moisture. For maximum comfort, the control dial, should be set between a range of 40% to 50% relative humidity during winter months. You are likely to feel more comfortable and warmer with the humidistat set to that range and may save on your heating bills. Those residents that have moved to Vancouver from drier climates, like the prairies, may recall they would have had to add moisture to the air in the winter months for comfort.

## Additional Solutions

In addition to the solutions noted on the first page, you may also use these options:

- Use a dehumidifier.
- When running fans, have a source of makeup air into the unit like a partially opened window.
- Keep the bathroom door closed and fan running while showering or bathing.
- Run the laundry dryer on air dry for 10-15 additional minutes after removing dry laundry.
- Reduce steam when filling the bath by running cold water first and then adding hot water.
- Use ceiling fans to help circulate air; set the fans to rotate in a clockwise direction to push warm air from the ceiling back down to the floor.
- Replace old bathroom fan with a high cfm (cubic feet per minute) & low sones (noise) rating.
- Keep rooms warm even when not in use; this helps keep the air dry and warm the windows.
- Don't over water plants and watch for mold growth on plants.
- Take garbage and composting out regularly.
- Promote air circulation by:
  - leaving a gap between bottom of window blinds and window sills.
  - keeping doors open when rooms aren't in use.
  - keeping furniture and other belongings away from exterior walls and windows.