

Moisture in Your Home

With the spring thaw upon us, many homes will once again experience cases of excess moisture. While moisture inside homes is normal and common, too much moisture can lead to issues. The following tips can help to reduce moisture in your home year-round.

What does frost build up look like?



Frost build up (left) can occur across your home, especially in basements. Contrary to popular belief, concrete is not an impermeable barrier and water is capable of passing through. When warm air comes into contact with a cold surface, like a basement floor, condensation occurs.

To avoid excess moisture and condensation, be sure your thermostat settings aren't **too high** or **too low**. The ideal setting is 20 – 22°C. Additionally, ensure your humidifier settings reflect the outdoor temperature.

Outdoor Temperature (°C)	Ideal Humidity Setting
-30	15%
-25	20%
-20	25%
-10	30%
-5	35%
0 or Higher	40%

Other helpful tips to avoid excess moisture throughout your home, not just your basement, include operating ventilation fans in your bathroom, making sure your floor vents aren't blocked, and removing any pooled water **immediately**.

There's condensation showing in my unfinished basement - Help!

It's **very normal** for droplets of moisture, or even a frost wall (right), to form in your basement walls. The plastic sheets between your home and the insulation are actually moisture barriers and seeing moisture here means the barriers are doing their job!

However, seepage can occur so it's best to monitor the situation and make sure you're following the tips of avoiding excess moisture build-up.



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Outside Your Home – Sideways, Driveways and More



To help prevent excess moisture in your home, you should also prevent snow, ice or slush accumulate in the areas around it. Constant freezing and thawing is also damaging to concrete while exterior issues such as soil destabilization can also occur – leading to structural concrete cracks.

Concrete cracks will always occur due to settle and hydration, which is **normal**.

Other tips to consider outside your home include shoveling snow away from the foundations and window wells, clearing your furnace and exhaust vents of any ice and pointing downspouts away from your home. Ideally, downspouts should extend **two metres** away from your foundation and **two metres** away from public pathways.

Avoid the pain of Attic Rain

Much like basements, attics are another cold area of your home where moisture can develop over time if left unchecked during extended periods of cold weather. Attic rain comes in two types – **localized** and **generalized**. Localized (below left) is usually from a large hole or unsealed exhaust vents while generalized (below right) occurs throughout the whole attic and often affects the walls. It is normal and common to have some condensation or frost in attics in small amounts.



The two main factors in causing attic rain are **Holes & Pressures**. Newer homes have higher insulation levels limiting heat loss while older homes can experience attic rain after adding insulation or a new furnace. Adding ventilation **does not** prevent attic rain.

Practical solutions include reducing warm, moist house air leaking into your attic, sealing and insulating your attic hatch, insulating your attic to prevent snow from melting on your roof or clearing snow from buried roof vents.