

# High humidity problem can lead to structural damage

This article is provided by local Realtors and the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) for the benefit of consumers in the real estate market.

Has your house developed a musty smell recently? Do you have a lot of condensation on your windows? Have you noticed any mould or mildew on your walls or in your closets? Do your windows ice up during the winter? Is your basement damp and dank?

If so, your house is probably suffering from an overabundance of moist air (high humidity). Left unchecked, this problem can eventually lead to structural damage (rotting wood and buckling) as well as causing harm to your belongings.

But before you panic, keep in mind that there are several, relatively simple things you can do to make your home less humid and much more comfortable.

First, you should realize that a certain amount of humidity is necessary in your home, to keep you comfortable, control static electricity and prevent your wood furniture from cracking.

However, in many newly built or renovated homes which have been rendered virtually air-tight, condensation and higher levels of humidity may become more of a noticeable problem, because moist air becomes trapped and cannot escape as easily to the outside through gaps and cracks.

The problem becomes even more noticeable in the winter when lower outside temperatures cause condensation or ice to build up on the interior surfaces of windows.

## REDUCE AT SOURCE

The easiest way to begin cutting down the humidity in your home is to try and reduce the generation of moisture in your home - especially in winter.

Every time you do a load of laundry or wash dishes, you are contributing to the humidity level in your home. It's better (and more economical) to try and do one larger load of laundry or dishes than washing a series of several, smaller loads.

Boiling liquids on top of the stove also contribute to the general overall humidity level of your home. While cooking, try to remember to put lids on your pots. You should also try to use your cooking exhaust fan to vent any moist air to the outside. If you don't already have an exhaust fan in your kitchen, you may want to consider having one installed. You can also open a window to help expel any moist, warm air.

The same rule of thumb applies to showering and bathing. Make sure you turn on your exhaust fan to draw moist air out of the house. If you don't have a ventilating fan, you may want to have one installed. If you have a fan, but it fails to do an adequate job, you may want to consider upgrading to a more powerful unit.

You can also open up your bathroom window a bit, to let any warm, moist air escape.

## OTHER FACTORS

Several other factors also contribute to the general humidity level of your home, such as drying your laundry on an indoor clothesline or clothes rack.

An exposed dirt floor in the basement or crawl space can also enhance the humidity level of your home. Installation of vapor barriers can help effectively control the problem.

Houseplants are also responsible for giving off moisture, and you may want to eliminate some if you have an overabundant supply in your house.

You may also be adding a significant amount of humidity to your home if you have a recently

renovated, well-sealed house and you use a humidifier. In most cases, this will only serve to enhance the humidity level in your home.

## VENTILATION

Good ventilation will help you control the moisture levels within your home. Exhaust fans, as mentioned above, are a good way to ventilate rooms where a lot of moisture is generated. You can also have a fresh air intake or an

air exchanger (with a heat exchanger) installed. Opening windows for short periods of time also helps to keep your house better ventilated.

It's extremely important to ensure that air can move freely throughout your home. Don't block your cold air returns or heat registers. Also make sure your attic vents are not blocked and that they are in good operating condition.

## Beauty in distinctive toppings



DISTINCTIVE "ARCHED-TOP" CURTAIN and valance treatments can be achieved with the new Arch Curtain Rod introduced by Newell Window Furnishings. Available in two sizes to fit windows from 30" to 66," the Arch Curtain Rods fit all standard-width rod pocket curtains.



**DOUG PENRICE**  
Sales Representative

**NRS**  
NATIONAL REAL ESTATE SERVICE

**BRAND REALTY INC.**

45 Mountainview Rd. N., Georgetown  
**873-0300**



**DIANNE PENRICE**  
Sales Representative

*"Success Through Service"*



**PROFIT BY BUYING NOW!**  
Be quick and let's take a look at this well priced 4 bedroom family home. Central air installed in 1990. Nicely landscaped lot, rock garden and children's play gym in fenced back yard. Asking only **\$184,900.**

NRS-9504



**TODAY'S BUY — TOMORROW'S SECURITY!**  
With this 3 bedroom bungalow. Nice lot, hardwood floors, potential in-law suite. **\$159,900.**

NRS-9476



**CREATE A LIFESTYLE OF LIVING!!**  
When you move into this Penthouse condo apartment. Two bedroom unit has its own laundry room and 5 appliances. This is a must to see! **NRS-9490**

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS CALL DOUG/DIANNE PENRICE**  
Sales Reps at 873-0300 or 877-8768



**JOHN HILL**  
Sales Representative



**GLENDA HUGHES**  
Sales Representative

**NRS** NATIONAL REAL ESTATE SERVICE

**BRAND REALTY INC.**

## EXECUTIVE SUITE!



Glen Williams charmer that's loaded with extras. Original trims, French doors, two fireplaces, sunroom, sauna, and decorated to the "nines"! Executive taste only at **\$399,900.** Call Glenda Hughes or John Hill.

NRS-9483