

How best to prevent mould in your home

Excessive, uncontrolled moisture in your home could lead to rot and serious damage. It is also damaging to your health if mould appears. Airborne mould spores are often pegged for mild irritations and allergies, and can cause more serious respiratory illnesses in infants, pregnant women and the elderly. Here are a few of the key ways to stop it:

- Check home humidity. Health Canada recommends year-round relative humidity levels of 30% to 55%, depending on personal requirements. It is often difficult however, to maintain a humidity level above 20% before condensation appears on the windows.

- Replace windows. New windows should incorporate energy-efficient features that help control condensation. Windows labelled by the international organization, Energy Star, qualify as the highest in their category for energy efficiency. These products could save you hundreds of dollars in energy costs and will significantly reduce pollutants in the air as well.

- Build and renovate with concrete, not wood. If your home is built with traditional stick-framing methods, mould growth is a considerable risk due to the natural properties of wood. But, the more eco-conscious building suppliers like Nudura, have created pre-



assembled forms that are filled with reinforced concrete for constructing homes. These Lego-like blocks deliver double the insulation and also eliminate gaps in walls where moisture can collect causing mould. It is reported that buildings with this concrete innovation (nudura.com) are up to nine times stronger, provide far more fire protection, far more sound insulation and can produce energy savings of up to 70 per cent.

- Control water use at home. Excessive use of humidifiers, showers, washing machines saturate the air.

- Quick Fix. As a temporary solution, open a window in each room for just a few minutes. This will allow stale, humid air to escape, and fresh dry air to enter, with minimal heat loss.

—News Canada

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