

Chapter 2: Effects of Prolonged Occupancy

Your recreational vehicle was designed primarily for recreational use and short-term occupancy. If you expect to occupy the coach for an extended period, be prepared to deal with condensation and the humid conditions that may be encountered. The relatively small volume and tight compact construction of modern recreational vehicles means that the normal living activities of even a few occupants will lead to rapid moisture saturation of the air contained in the fifth-wheel and the appearance of visible moisture, especially in cold weather.

Just as moisture collects on the outside of a glass of cold water during humid weather, moisture can condense on the inside surfaces of the recreational vehicle during cold weather when relative humidity of the interior air is high. This condition is increased because the insulated walls of a recreational vehicle are much thinner than house walls. Estimates indicate that a family of four can vaporize up to three gallons of water daily through breathing, cooking, bathing and washing.

Unless the water vapor is carried outside by ventilation or condensed by a dehumidifier, it will condense on the inside of the windows and walls as moisture or in cold weather as frost or ice. It may also condense out of sight within the walls or the ceiling where it will manifest itself as warped or stained panels. Appearance of these conditions may indicate a serious condensation problem. When you recognize the signs of excessive moisture and condensation in the coach, action should be taken to minimize their effects.

To Avoid Condensation Problems, Follow These Tips

- Allow excess moisture to escape to the outside when bathing, washing dishes, hair-drying, laundering and using appliances and non-vented gas burners.
- Always use the vent hood when cooking.
- Keep the bathroom door closed and the vent or window open when bathing and for a period of time after you have finished.
- Do not hang wet clothes in the coach to dry.
- In hot weather, start the air conditioner early as it removes excess humidity from the air while lowering the temperature.
- Keep the temperature as reasonably cool during cold weather as possible. The warmer the vehicle the more cold exterior temperatures and warm interior temperatures will collide on wall surfaces creating condensation.
- Use a fan to keep air circulating inside the vehicle so condensation and mildew cannot form in dead air spaces. Allow air to circulate inside closets and cabinets (leave doors partially open). Please keep in mind that a closed cabinet full of stored goods prevents circulation and allows the exterior temperature to cause condensation.
- The natural tendency would be to close the vehicle tightly during cold weather. This will actually compound the problem. Simply put, you need to remove some of the warm air and allow some cool outside air to get inside the vehicle so the furnace will not recycle the humid interior air.
- Use fluorescent ceiling lights and minimize prolonged use of incandescent lights, which produce heat and contribute to condensation in the roof above the ceiling lights.





Remember, your trailer is not designed, nor intended, for permanent housing. Use of this product for long-term or permanent occupancy may lead to premature deterioration of structure, interior finishes, fabrics, carpeting and drapes. Damage or deterioration due to long-term occupancy may not be considered normal and may, under the terms of the warranty, constitute misuse, abuse or neglect and may therefore reduce the warranty protection.



If using a dehumidifier, please read and follow all manufacturer instructions and recommendations for use and cleaning.

About Molds

What are molds?

Molds are microscopic organisms that naturally occur in virtually every environment, indoors and out. Outdoors, mold growth is important in the decomposition of plants. Indoors, mold growth is unfavorable. Left unchecked, molds break down natural materials such as wood products and fabrics. Knowing the potential risks is important for any type of consumer to protect their investment.

What factors contribute to mold growth?

For mold growth to occur, temperatures indoors or outdoors must be between 40 degrees and 100 degrees Fahrenheit and there must be a source of moisture such as humidity, standing water, damp materials, etc. Indoors, the most rapid growth occurs with warm and humid conditions.

How can mold growth be inhibited?

By controlling relative humidity, the growth of mold and mildew can be inhibited. In warm climates, use of the air conditioner will reduce the relative humidity. Vents are located in the bathing and cooking areas and constant use is advised during food preparation and bathing even during colder weather. Additionally, opening a window during these activities will assist in ventilation. In extremely humid conditions, using a dehumidifier can be helpful.

Further Information About Molds

Frequent use of your coach and maintaining its cleanliness are important preventive measures. Further, any spills should be wiped up quickly and dried as soon as possible. Avoid leaving damp items lying about. On safe surfaces, use mold or mildew-killing cleaning products. Check sealants regularly and reseal when necessary to avoid water leaks. Proper preventive maintenance to the RV and its accessories, as described both in this manual and in accompanying literature, will provide the best protection for your unit.