

Common Window Concerns

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At GPM, our Managers have become quite familiar with all things related to resident window concerns, and we have gained solid knowledge of the causes, and best methods to resolve. In this article we will review common window issues, including the most frequently reported issue of window condensation.

Has the window or frame failed or is it condensation?

Usually you will notice a window concern when you find water or air leaking into your unit or condensation/frost gathering on the window glass. At this point, residents will need to determine what exactly is going on with their window(s), and they should never hesitate to reach out to their Manager for assistance.

So, let's review what could be going on...

Failed Window Seal: This problem is often evident by moisture gathering between the panes; or perhaps things beyond the window look distorted; or maybe the window simply has very evident damage. Most likely such windows will need to be replaced, and in most Condominiums, the windows are a common element that the Corporation will be responsible for replacing. Check your Declaration and/or ask your Manager. If the window was accidentally damaged by a resident, there may be a charge back for the replacement.

Poor Drainage: If the water seems to be coming from the window frame during rainfall events, residents may need to clean the window track and the drainage holes - also called weep holes. Doing so will permit the water to drain off as intended, and you should no longer see water coming into the unit.

Failed Caulking or Window Flashing: If the water seems to be coming in around the frame, it might only need re-caulking or perhaps the exterior flashing is in need of repair. Please contact your Condominium Manager to have this inspected.

Drafty Windows: Make sure your windows are closed and locked properly. The lock will help complete the seal, and hopefully reduce drafts. Weather stripping or re-caulking can sometimes reduce drafts from windows, but if this fails the window may need replacement.

Condensation: This is probably the most common concern reported to Condominium Managers, and usually one of the easiest to address. Window Condensation will be more prevalent in the colder months, and the condensation may not just collect on the windows, some residents may notice water collecting on exterior walls and balcony doors as well. If it is cold outside the condensation may freeze on your windows, or if there is enough condensation you may notice mildew growing on your window frame, walls, or even floor damage. This problem must be addressed as soon as you notice it.

Condensation on windows is not always a sign there is something wrong with the windows. In fact, it could very well be a sign the windows are working effectively. They are creating a complete seal of your home.

So, then what's happening here? In most cases, there is excess moisture in the air within the unit that is collecting on the cool dry surface of your windows, doors and even exterior walls.

The following are the most common contributors to excess moisture levels:

- Stove top cooking/boiling pots
- Not using exhaust fan(s) or exhaust fans that are not working properly
- Keeping the home very warm
- Humidifiers
- Hanging clothes to dry
- A dryer that is not vented properly
- Not using the unit's heating fan/poor air circulation
- Many people residing in the home and/or pets
- A lot of house plants
- Long/warm showers - not using the bathroom exhaust fan
- Heavy drapery that blocks air from reaching the windows



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The best ways to combat excess humidity in your home:

- Dehumidifier – this is more for serious situations
- Lower the heat a little
- Improve air circulation
- Always use exhaust fans and keep them in good repair
- Purchase and use a moisture meter to monitor
- Open a window a small crack to let in cool dry air

Once you reduce the humidity levels in your home, the condensation problem should completely go away. If you see any sign of mildew, it will be important to carefully use a mildew-killing cleaning agent on the window frame, wall, etc. If you have tried the above, and the problem persists you should involve your Condominium Manager to figure out what's going on, and keep everyone in your home healthy and safe.



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