

Technical Bulletin

Condensation Patterning

No matter how clean a pane of glass may appear, there may always be contaminants present on the surface. These are normally invisible to the naked eye. When condensation forms on the glass surface, these contaminants can become apparent by influencing the rate of formation and the appearance of the moisture. This variation in appearance may be random or present itself in distinctive patterns. Fingerprints are the most common contaminant but any contaminant which creates a hydrophobic layer will produce these effects.

Window cleaning chemicals or degreasing agents are normally enough to remove these thin layers of material but some contaminants can be more difficult to remove and require mild abrasives for complete cleanliness. For example, deposits from glass carrying suckers can form chemical bonds to the glass surface.

Therefore the patterns formed by condensation on glass surfaces do not indicate any fault and have no effect on the performance of the glass, mechanically or physically. It is just an indication that the glass surface has been modified.

It should be noted that the presence of condensation on glass surfaces can be damaging to paintwork, curtains, wall coverings, frames and window fittings and it is highly recommended that serious consideration is taken into improving the heating and ventilation of the building.