

# Maintenance of Silicone Sealants

Mould growth on silicone sealants is common and should be addressed promptly to prevent it from infiltrating the sealant. Mould can appear as black spots or stains, on the sealant surface with key factors contributing to mould growth including:

- High moisture levels and poor ventilation (e.g., in bathrooms and kitchens)
- Organic waste (soaps, body oils, kitchen residues) on the sealant surface
- Warm temperatures and humidity

Silicone and similar sealants are excellent insulators and retain heat, making them a prime environment for mould growth when combined with organic material.

## Mould resistant silicones

APTC Australia offers a full range of silicone sealants containing mould inhibitors (fungicides). These inhibitors reduce mould formation, but will deplete over time, eventually allowing mould to form again. Sealants with mould inhibitors will resist mould for longer than those without.

## Prevention

Regular cleaning and disinfecting of the sealant surface will help prevent mould growth. Proper ventilation and maintaining a dry environment is also crucial.

To extend the mould resistant properties of the sealant, ensure the area is well-ventilated, and regularly cleaned clean surfaces with a neutral or alkaline cleaner.

## Cleaning

Silicone is not abrasion-resistant, so the use of abrasive cleaners (e.g. Ajax), abrasive pads or harsh scrubbers should be avoided. Do not use bleach, acidic or oxidizing cleaners. A soft cloth with a mild household detergent such as dishwashing liquid is usually sufficient for cleaning. Sealant can be stained by fumes and these stains cannot be removed. Staining will generally not affect performance

## Dealing with Mould Growth

If mould remains on the surface, anti-mould sprays can be used to kill the fungi and remove any black residue. If mould penetrates the sealant, the damaged sealant must be completely removed, and the joint area thoroughly sanitized before applying new sealant.

## Repair

If the silicone is damaged, it can be repaired using the same type of silicone. Contact APTC Australia 1300 394 239 to obtain the appropriate repair silicone. Ensure the substrate is clean, dry, and free of oil and grease before repairing.