Mouldy smell from air conditioner

All series

Complaint:

A mouldy smell can be detected inside the vehicle for a short time in either heating or air-conditioning mode. This happens in particular immediately after the engine is started with the air conditioner or automatic air conditioner switched on, or after switching the air conditioner off during a journey.

Cause:

The cause of this complaint is not a fault in the air conditioner or automatic air conditioner, nor in the vehicle. The odour is caused by environmental influences during the air conditioner's operation period.

The continuous condensation of air humidity on the evaporator when the air conditioner or automatic air conditioner is operated over a lengthy period creates an ideal habitat for bacteria and other micro-organisms.

Together with impurities brought in from the outside air, these can cause microbes to grow on the evaporator, resulting in a mouldy smell.

By changing the microfilter regularly, the entry of impurities can be minimised and occurrences of the above-mentioned issues can be delayed and/or prevented.

Replacing the evaporator does not produce a lasting result as microbes are still able to form again.

Affected vehicles:

All model series with air conditioner (IHKR) or automatic air conditioner (IHKA)

Procedure:

1. Cleaning with the "Aircomatic" evaporator cleaning unit

In case of customer complaint, clean the evaporator with the "Aircomatic" cleaning unit supplied by the company WYNN'S. The "Airco-Clean" cleaning agent from the same company is required for this process.

WYNN'S calls this cleaning process the "ultrasonic method."

Important:

The "Seku-Aircond" cleaning agent for the spray unit may not be used for this process.

Description of the working steps:

- Remove the microfilter (after cleaning the unit, replace it with a new filter).
- Start the vehicle.
- Switch off the air conditioner.
- Set the temperature control to minimum.
- For automatic air-conditioning systems (IHKA): Switch off the automatic air distribution/air supply.
- Select the lowest blower speed.
- Set the ventilation to aim at the upper body area.
- Set the air supply to air recirculation.
- Shake bottle of "Airco-Clean" well.
- Set the ultrasonic device upside down and screw the bottle of "Airco-Clean" into the unit with the opening at the top.

- Screw the ultrasonic device back into its original position, so that the bottle can drain partially into the unit.
- Lie the ultrasonic device horizontally in the footwell on the front passenger side.
- Attach the spray hose to the unit.
- Lay the spray hose in a position which ensures that the recirculating air system can suck in the vapours emitted from it.

  Make sure that there are no kinks in the hose!
- Connect the ultrasonic device with the power cable provided.

  The spraying begins!
- Close all doors and windows of the vehicle.

  Important: Never allow any persons to remain inside the vehicle during treatment!
- After approximately 20 minutes, treatment is finished and the ultrasonic device shuts off.
- After treatment, open the doors and ventilate the vehicle for approximately 5 minutes.
- After treatment, pour out any residual fluid in the ultrasonic device and rinse the ultrasonic device with water briefly.

2. Cleaning with the spray unit

If the "ultrasonic method" does not achieve lasting results because of strong contamination of the evaporator, the evaporator must be cleaned with a spray lance and the "Seku-Aircond" disinfectant.

Compared to the "ultrasonic method," the mechanical cleaning power for this method is greater, as in this case a disinfectant is sprayed at high pressure.

The disinfectant to be used for this process (Seku-Aircond) is delivered as a 100% concentrate in a 2-litre package.

However, it is used at a concentration of only 5%. That means: To make 1 litre of cleaning agent, mix 50 ml of disinfectant with 950 ml of plain water. After spraying, the cleaning agent must be allowed to work for 15 minutes. Then, rinse the evaporator with 1 litre of plain water.

Description of the working steps:
For the following model series, refer to the corresponding repair instructions for a more detailed description of the working procedure. Repair instructions which are currently unavailable will be updated according to series processing.

- E39, E53 with air conditioner (IHKR):
  Cleaning the evaporator RAE3964-6451001
- E39, E53 with automatic air conditioner (IHKA):
  Cleaning the evaporator (automatic air conditioner) RAE3964-6451002
- E46 with air conditioner (IHKR) or automatic air conditioner (IHKA):
  Cleaning the evaporator RAE3964-6451001
- E65/E66 with air conditioner (IHKR) or automatic air conditioner (IHKA):
  Cleaning the evaporator RAE6564-6451001
- E60/E61/E63/E64 with air conditioner (IHKR) or automatic air conditioner (IHKA):
  Cleaning the evaporator RAE6064-6451001
- E85 with air conditioner (IHKR) or automatic air conditioner (IHKA): Cleaning the evaporator RAE8564-6451001
- E87/E90 with air conditioner (IHKR) or automatic air conditioner (IHKA): Cleaning the evaporator RAE8764-6451001

Parts:

1. Cleaning with the "Aircomatic" evaporator cleaning unit

(applies to all series)

Description	Part number	Quantity
"Aircomatic" cleaning unit	81 34 0 307 140	1
Airco-Clean	83 10 0 308 228	12 (1 box containing 12 pieces)

The "Aircomatic" cleaning unit can be obtained from the company CARTOOL, and the "Airco-Clean" cleaning agent can be obtained directly from BMW Parts Department.

2. Cleaning with the spray unit

Description	Order number/Part number	Quantity
Spray device:	64 1 450	1
- E39, E46, E53		
- E65, E66, E67 (left-hand drive)	64 1 280	1
- E65, E66, E67 (right-hand drive)	64 1 290	1
E60, E61, E63, E64	64 1 480	1
- E85 (left-hand drive)	64 1 490	1
- E85 (right-hand drive)	64 1 250	1
- E87/E90 (left-hand drive)	64 1 260	1
- E87/E90 (right-hand drive)	64 1 270	1
SATA spray gun	81 45 9 429 217	1
Seku-Aircond	81 22 9 410 394	1

The spray device can be obtained only from the company CARTOOL; the spray gun and the "Seku-Aircond" cleaning agent can be obtained from BMW Parts Department.

Warranty reimbursement is not possible as the problem does not constitute a technical defect.