

ClaySpace Ceramic Arts Center

Safety Procedures for Students and Resident Artists

You may develop problems if you are:

- A person with a history of asthma, allergies, or other chronic illnesses.
- Handling dry clay and glaze materials without proper respiratory protection.
- Working with highly toxic materials. (The use of lead, barium or manganese is not allowed.)

In General - Studio Safety procedures

Know the exact location of the following safety items:

Fire extinguishers are in three locations:

- 1) On the wall outside the side loading bay.
- 2) On the wall outside the front bay
- 3) On the wall in the gallery, close to the front entrance.

Phone and emergency numbers are located in the multi-purpose room.

First Aid supplies are in the labeled container near the clay sinks.

Do not attempt to use equipment, materials or operate machinery before you have been shown how to use it safely and properly. Report any irregularity in the machine operation to the operations manager so the machine can be checked.

Know the materials being used-- especially if they will be used for a long period. Material Data Safety Sheets are available for reference in a marked binder in the glaze area.

Wash hands frequently to get rid of silica dust and other toxic materials. It is best to keep fingernails short and clean while working. Remember, some materials, such as oxides, can be absorbed through the skin (use the gloves that are provided) or ingested with food.

Please keep food items out of the studio.

Clean the area each time work finishes. All cleaning must be done with wet mops or sponges. Sweeping is not allowed as it generates silica dust, which is a long term health hazard.

Wear shoes, not sandals, when working with heavy shelves or a Raku firing.

Long hair, jewelry and loose clothing must be restrained when working with electrical and mechanical moving equipment.

Turn off machines and equipment not in use.

Beware of electrical hazards. Keep water buckets, wet sponges, etc. away from outlets and the water heater.

When wedging, keep the wrist in neutral or mid-joint position and use the weight of the body rather than just the muscles of the upper limb.

If you are pregnant or planning pregnancy, check with your doctor regarding your exposure to potentially dangerous materials.

Use equipment properly as instructed. Any tools or equipment damaged or lost will be repaired/replaced by the person using it. All tools or equipment must be put away by user. Report any lost or damaged tools immediately.

Remember that you are ultimately responsible for your health and safety. Let's watch out for each other and keep the studio accident free.

Main Studio Safety

Wheels:

Report frayed wires or an electrical shock to your instructor or the Operations Director. Avoid getting water on electrical plug-ins.

Slab Machine:

Make sure the clay is between two canvas sheets so it doesn't stick to the rollers. Make sure your fingers do not get caught in the rollers. Use softer clay to prevent stress on the rollers and flatten the slab to less than an inch thickness.

Extruder:

Cleaning the extruder is best done with water and a sponge. Other objects put in it may get jammed, and may result in pinched fingers. Use soft clay to avoid damage to the machine. Clean the extruder immediately after using it.

Glaze Area Safety

Spray Booth:

The ventilation system should be on for all work performed in the spray booth.

Glazes, slips, etc. must be mixed in the spray booth. Screening and weighing must be done within the hood with the fan on. Anyone using the spray booth must wear a mask. (The approved mask N95 [3m 8511 NIOSH] mask can be purchased at Home Depot or most paint stores.)

When working with dry materials, avoid generating dust. Any spill of material, especially dry material, needs to be reported to the studio manager or your instructor. Working with plaster should also be done in the spray booth. Avoid contaminating clay in the studio with plaster.

Grinding Wheel

When grinding, wear a face shield, a two-strap dust mask (see above) and gloves. Restrain loose hair, jewelry and long hair.

Fans and Heat Guns:

All electrical drying items are to be turned off and/or unplugged when not in use. Hot heat guns should never be rested on a surface that will melt or burn. After cooling, heat guns should be stored in the bin provided. Students may bring their own gas torches.

Kiln Area Safety

Electric Kilns:

Observe and follow all instructions for loading and unloading the kilns.

Anytime the kiln is being loaded or unloaded or the top is open, all controls must be on "OFF" to avoid possible electric shock from the elements.

Make sure the kiln's fan is on before using kiln.

To protect the kiln, never put projects or kiln furniture on top of the lids or on the brick edge of the opening. When propping the lid open, use soft brick.

When opening or closing the lid hold with two hands and lower gently so the lid does not slam shut.

Turn the controls to OFF after firing is complete.

Gas Kiln:

The instructional binder for the gas kiln is located in the storage area near the kiln itself. Only experienced personnel operate this kiln.

The emergency shut off for the gas kiln is near the floor on the North wall immediately to the left of the glass electric kiln under the sign reading "emergency gas shutoff".

Glass Area Safety

Wear safety glasses when cutting, grinding or sawing glass. Small pieces of glass can fly into the air and enter your eye causing serious damage.

Use respiratory protection when handling ground glass.

Wear a dust mask when working with glass powders. Glass powders can be inhaled, especially when grinding and sawing glass.

Wear ear plugs when using loud equipment such as the grinder or glass saw.

Wear latex or similar gloves when cutting or molding ceramic fiber products.

For small cuts, wash your hands well and wrap on an adhesive bandage until the bleeding stops. A "triple ointment" (Neosporin is one brand — it contains three different antibiotics.) can help the cuts heal faster.

When using a grinder, keep the grinder head and glass edges wet to minimize dust in the air.

If you open the kiln, watch out for gusts of hot air or bubbles in the glass that could pop and harm your eyes.

Wipe out the shelf paper residue in the kiln with a damp sponge to minimize spreading dust.

(Updated January 2015)