

# **London Clay Art Centre**

## **Studio Members' Manual**

**London Clay Art Centre is Owned and Operated by The London Potters Guild**

**664 Dundas Street**

**London, ON, Canada**

**N5W 2Y8**

**519-434-1664**

[www.londonclayartcentre.org](http://www.londonclayartcentre.org)

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This manual is a working document and may be updated with new information and policies as needed.

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## Agreement to Terms

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read, understand and fully agree to adhere to the information, procedures and policies outlined in the London Clay Art Centre Studio Members' Manual.

I understand that as a Studio Member I am required to provide a minimum of two service hours monthly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### **Mission Statement of The London Potters Guild**

*To be the leader in the education and promotion of the clay arts in Southwestern Ontario. We provide high-quality programming, nurture the development of professional clay artists, collaborate with other community organizations and encourage fellowship in an inclusive and accessible facility.*

### **The Philosophy of Our Studio**

*We are a welcoming, friendly guild of potters working and sharing together. We strive to provide a clean and safe studio experience for clay artists of varying skill levels. Our common goal is to maintain an enriching and creative environment for all those interested in clay.*

### **Purpose of This Manual**

The purpose of this studio members' manual is to foster a safe and efficient studio and to introduce new studio members to the guidelines and policies of the London Clay Art Centre (LCAC) studio. This manual provides:

- a transparent, accessible, and standardized base of best practices and studio policy\* for all users of the clay studio
- procedures for problem resolution
- a description of staff and members duties
- preparation for working in a community studio ("guild") environment
- technical and safety guidance

*\*Studio policy is based on the contents of this manual and our Code of Conduct. All users of the clay studio agree to the procedures, policies and guidelines set forth within.*

This manual is accessible by all users of the studio.

- A copy is provided upon registration.
- A printed copy is located under the sales counter in the store.
- A copy is mounted outside the washrooms on the main floor.
- A digital copy is available at <http://www.londonclayartcentre.org/membership.html>

## **About the Studio at London Clay Art Centre**

The Clay Studio is open for drop-in use by studio members 24 hours a day. Members will be assigned a key fob to enter the building from the parking lot off Elizabeth Street (North entrance) and the front entrances off Dundas St. (South entrances). Studio membership is available for one year, renewable in September.

## **How to Become a Studio Member**

The main floor of the LCAC is an open studio for “studio members” of The London Potters Guild (LPG). Membership is not valid and studio use is not permitted until the following prerequisites have been met to the satisfaction of the membership Coordinator. You may be asked to provide examples of work to demonstrate your level of ability and knowledge.

- Completion of 3 qualifying clay classes through the LPG or other recognized organization.
- Equivalent training or experience.
- You are 18 years of age or older.
- You read and sign in agreement with this manual and the Code of Conduct.
- Payment of guild and studio membership dues.

As demands on the LCAC studio grow, the Board of Directors reserves the right to limit the number of studio members at any time.

### **Orientation**

The Membership Coordinator will conduct an orientation with new studio members in order to familiarize them with particulars relating to our studio. If you wish to be partnered with a mentor while settling into the facility, please ask the membership Coordinator. We have many wonderful, experienced, friendly members who would be glad to assist.

## The Studio

All clay artists, staff, and members have a responsibility to maintain the proper working environment of our studio. The following best practices, guidelines and policies are designed to ensure everyone has a positive experience. The following guidelines are based on the experience and knowledge gathered over the 35 plus year history of The London Potters Guild. If you seek clarification, please feel free to ask the service committee or staff involved with that specific aspect of the guild. If further information is required please contact the Board of Directors.

### General Guidelines

- Emergency procedures and contacts are posted across from the coat closet and beside the glaze area sink.
- Our Code of Conduct is posted across from the coat closet.
- A list of service committee heads and staff is located in the store and posted across from the coat closet on the main floor.
- Be respectful of the studio, other studio users, LCAC staff and equipment at all times.
- The Membership Engagement Committee association (MECA) is a committee dedicated to helping new and existing members become engaged in contributing to the active running of the London Clay Art Centre. Please contact them by contacting the MECA Coordinator.
- Our studio is available for use by any LPG studio member 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- Members are allowed to bring in a guest\* on average no more than once per month. A guest must relinquish space to studio members as soon as asked or required and is expected to adhere to the same guidelines as the members. If they wish to return please have them purchase a membership. Family memberships are available through the membership Coordinator. (*\*A guest is defined as a member of your family or a close friend who is interested in pottery.*)
- Please do not handle any unfinished pieces that are not yours unless asked/directed to do so. (e.g. loading kilns)
- Please store personal items, work, tools, apron, etc. on your rented shelf/shelves only. Do not utilize any communal use space or surface.
- Storage has been allocated with the best interest of all in mind. Items left out or stored inappropriately will be discarded.
- For health and safety reasons, no items are to be stored under the rental shelves.
- For health and safety reasons, the height of pots or other items placed on the top rental shelves must not exceed 36 inches.
- Please ensure that all personal shelves are strong and all items are secured. If they present a falling hazard you will be asked to remove or secure them.
- Please ensure the items on your shelf do not in any way interfere with shelves beside or below yours (e.g. apron/towel should not hang in front of lower shelves; items should not fall through shelves.)

- The plaster slab is for clay wedging and quick reclaim while you are working. Do not use metal scrapers on this slab. The patina ensures that plaster does not contaminate your clay. Metal scrapers will ruin this.
- The slate table (a pool table from the late 1800's) is for wedging all colours of clay providing proper clean up is completed. Metal scrapers may be used on this table.
- Please be mindful of other studio members' needs. The wedging tables need to be accessed by all. These are for clay preparation and not to be used for storage or as a work surface.
- Music is to be kept at a level inaudible to others in the studio unless agreed to verbally by all those within listening distance.
- There is a limited number of wheels and tables. Please share the space. Offer to condense your footprint when others are in need of working surfaces. Items and work left unattended for more than a few minutes may be considered abandoned and removed or discarded.
- If you are leaving the building (e.g. to eat) you must clean before you go and reset when you return.
- Members who rent studio spaces have personal workspace and are expected to relocate there if a studio member requires the communal space.
- Please allow at least 30 minutes for clean up. You may be charged a fee if others are left to clean after you.
- You are responsible for cleaning all areas and surfaces where you have worked. (floor, legs of tables, sinks, walls etc.). Leaving a mess compromises someone else's studio enjoyment. If everyone cleans a little extra, the studio will always be an inviting place to work. (see "Clean Up" and Health & Safety for greater detail).
- Mid smooth stone clay that you do not wish to keep (trimmings, unwanted pots, any clay slop which can be picked up) is to be placed in the "Solid Clay" bin. Clay slurry (clay that cannot be picked up but is more clay than water) is to be placed in the "Clay Slurry" bin.
- All clay water is to be poured into the studio sinks. These sinks have special clay traps installed to catch clay that may remain after the above has been completed.
- Take care to clean your hands at the studio sinks prior to using the bathroom. Clay rinsed in the bathroom sinks will cause major plumbing problems.
- It is preferable not to do any sanding. If you must, only wet sanding techniques are allowed. (See "Silicosis" under "Hazards")
- Inspect and clean your pots thoroughly before they are to be bisqued. This will avoid the temptation to sand later.
- Do not, under any circumstances, rinse food or drink dishes in any sink other than the one in the kitchen. Organic matter will rot in the studio sinks creating a foul smell.
- Only Mid Smooth Stone clay is to be placed in the solid clay bin. Other clays have their own buckets, must be reclaimed by you or disposed of in the garbage.
- Only bone-dry or near bone-dry work may go onto the shelves for bisque firing. The kiln room is not for drying work. If your work is fired wet and cracks, it is your responsibility, not the kiln loaders'.

- When your work is ready for bisque firing, place it on the kiln room shelves marked “To be Bisqued”.
- After the bisque firing, glaze the work and place it on the kiln room shelves marked “To Be Glazed”.
- Write or stamp your name on your work for easy identification. Unidentified pieces will not be fired.
- In order for communal shelf space to function effectively, (greenware, bisque, glaze, finished) everyone must keep their work moving through the studio in a timely fashion. (see “Movement of Clay Work” )
- It is suggested that you provide personal ware boards suited to your work. Sign them and store them on your shelf. Cover ware boards with plastic or paper before you place pots on them for ease of cleaning and longevity.
- Dry pots will automatically be removed from communal boards and placed on shelves by the staff if needed. The Guild does not provide enough boards or bats for all members to be utilizing them at once.
- Please do not store any communal use tool (e.g. banding wheels, slump molds, etc.) on your personal shelf.
- When work is unloaded from the glaze kiln, it is considered complete. Please take completed work home or store it in your cubby. Do not put it back on the shelves. (See “Glazed Work”)
- Any unclaimed/abandoned work will be disposed of to ensure adequate room for active studio users.
- If you are not glazing work immediately, it is safer to take it home. Storage space is at a premium and your work will remain cleaner and safer if wrapped and boxed until glazing.
- Work over 30 days old remaining on the finished glaze or bisque shelves becomes the property of the LCAC and may be disposed of or used for fundraising.
- To avoid contamination, do not use areas or items marked for glazing for anything else.
- To avoid contamination only glaze in the designated glazing area.
- For health and safety reasons, do not use food utensils or dishes for working with glaze or clay.
- Please do not leave splash pans, bats, and buckets at the sinks. Return items to where they were found. It is ok to return them wet.
- Please dispose of used newspapers. Do not return for reuse as clay dust is a health and safety issue and contamination of the next person’s work may occur.
- If a glaze appears too thin or thick, do not use it. Put a note on the glaze communication board located in the glaze area and/or mention it to a member of the glaze committee. The committee members or the Studio Technician will correct the issue.
- Do not thin or decant glazes yourself unless you have been trained to do so for that specific glaze by the glaze committee or the Technician. Some glazes need to be thick or thin to ensure proper functionality.

- Unless absolutely necessary do not disturb the studio members or staff loading the kilns and performing other tasks necessary for the flow of work and functioning of the studio. These people are on a tight schedule and may not complete their work if interrupted. If you require assistance from a staff or studio member who is loading kilns etc., announce yourself and ask if they can talk. If they have time or wish to, they will. If not, please respect their reasoning. Do not expect them to set aside their task to teach you how to make a specific type of pot. It is not in their job description. We offer a wide selection of classes and workshops to help you on your clay journey. Please take a class or ask them to schedule assistance at a time of their convenience. Alternately, many studio members are willing to give advice or help while working on their own clay. This is part of what makes us a guild!
- There is a members' area on the second floor. Please eat your lunch/dinner there when it is available. This is a much cleaner and safer place for you to eat. There is a microwave and refrigerator both upstairs and down.
- A library – for members only – is located in the upstairs lounge.
- Coffee and other drinks should be in lidded containers if you wish to enjoy them uncontaminated in the studio.
- On those occasions when the members' area upstairs has been booked (e.g. for a workshop or class) please find a clean space to eat, wipe the table and make sure that your food is not contaminated with clay, glazes etc.. Never eat in the glaze area or glaze kitchen. See the health and safety manual by the glaze sink and "Health and Safety".
- Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the London Clay Art Center and within 9 meters of the north entrance (back or parking lot entrance). The air intakes are located here and will draw smoke throughout the building.
- If you are the last person to leave the building, please ensure that you turn off the lights upstairs and down.

### **Mandatory Service Hours for Studio Members**

Our studio relies on service hours to reduce membership fees, operate at a professional level and provide studio training to our members.

*Without sharing of experience and knowledge we may have a centre but we would not have a guild*

*All studio members are required to spend 2 hours per month sharing in the responsibility and experience of running our studio.*

Talk to our Studio Technician or the service committee Coordinator about your specific interests and skills. There are several areas you may commit your service hours to. Being part of a committee will provide you with experience and knowledge in key areas of the studio. If you have experience, this is an opportunity to share your knowledge.

Please remember to log your service hours so we may track them for statistical purposes. These numbers are used for grant applications and show how committed our membership is to the studio. They prove we are a guild.

LPG members who are interested supporting our education programs may choose to do so by volunteering time to support and assist a current teacher or workshop leader. This will count towards your mandatory volunteer hours and will help you decide if teaching is something you would like to pursue.

Members who wish to teach for the LCAC, must meet specified training requirements including some combination of the following:

- participation in a Teaching Assistant and/or Instructor workshop
- time spent shadowing an experienced teacher as a TA in a series of classes/workshops, either paid or voluntary
- instructing an internal workshop, team building, clay party and/or team-building event to observe teaching style
- past teaching experiences with another ceramic-based facility including references
- a referral from a current instructor familiar with the applicant's teaching experiences

Members who wish to teach for the LCAC, must meet specified training requirements including some combination of the following:

Additional requirements for all teachers include:

- A current police check
- attendance at a yearly instructor meeting

If you are interested in being part of our Teaching Program Staff, please contact the Program Coordinator for further information. You may also be asked to provide a resume/CV of your teaching experience and references. A digital copy of our current Instructor Manual is available upon request.

## **Failure to Comply**

In the case that a studio user, regardless of that person's role (i.e. drop-in user, volunteer, instructor, student, staff, etc.), fails to comply with the rules, etiquette, guidelines and protocol, outlined throughout this document and the Code of Conduct, the Studio Technician, committee head, staff member or member of the Board of Directors, will verbally notify them of the issue. Suggestions will be made to change habits in studio use. If non-compliance continues, the studio member will receive a written (hand or electronic) warning and be required to meet with the executive and may have their studio privileges appropriately reduced or revoked until resolutions have been achieved.

If resolutions are not achieved to the satisfaction of the executive, the person's membership or position will be revoked permanently, cost of any damages may be charged and the membership fee will not be refunded.

### **How to Resolve an Issue or Report a Failure to Comply**

If you notice or are directly involved with an incident where a studio user is seemingly in conflict with this document or the Code of Conduct, and the parties involved cannot satisfactorily resolve the situation please do the following.

1. Present the issue in writing to the committee head or staff member directly involved with that specific area of the studio.
2. If the issue is not resolved, or the committee head or staff member does not provide enough information, please present the issue in writing to the President of the executive board. The President can be reached via email or by placing a letter in the drop box opposite the coat closet on the first floor.

All issues brought forth will be treated as confidential.

### **Example of Resolution Process**

A member is seen causing cross contamination of glazes by not cleaning stir sticks and pouring containers between buckets of glaze. If you are comfortable, mention to the member that this causes colour issues for everyone using the glaze after them and that cleaning the sticks etc. will prevent the issue. If the person continues, bring the information in writing to the head of the glaze committee. If this person is uncomfortable resolving the issue or their resolution is unsatisfactory to you, present the issue in writing to the Technician. If the issue is still unresolved to your satisfaction, or the Technician deems it appropriate, one or both of you are to inform the President (in writing) of the situation and any efforts made to resolve it. The President will take into account all sides of the situation and appropriate resolutions will be made in accordance with parameters set out by the Board of Directors.

## Detailed Processes / Guidelines for Areas of LCAC Studio

### Glaze-Making Room (Glaze Kitchen)

- The glaze-making room (also called the glaze kitchen) is strictly off-limits to the classes and always off limits to children. The glaze kitchen may only be used by members who have been trained in glaze making either through the Studio Potter Program or under the supervision of instructors or the Studio Technician.
- Studio members may make test amounts (no greater than 100g batches) at no cost but amounts larger than 100g must be paid for per gram, per chemical as indicated in the glaze book located in the glaze kitchen. A reasonable number of glazes (as deemed by the Studio Technician) may be tested by each member. If you wish to test a full line of glazes or explore widely you must purchase the materials from suppliers.
- Studio members making up a test glaze must make sure the glaze test is placed on a secondary tile to protect the kiln shelf from potential glaze flaws. (e.g. unexpectedly runny glazes)
- Glazes our Studio Technician has made available for general studio use will be remade as required by the Glaze Committee. Please contact the Technician or glaze committee for training or to assist.

### Studio Glazes

- There are up to 12 studio glazes available to all studio members at one time. These are found under the glazing area worktables. Each studio glaze is labelled by name. (WHMIS information is located beside the glaze sink). A sample tile board is mounted in the glazing area for you to see the fired glaze colours and how they work with each other.
- Studio glazes have been chosen to provide a wide yet controlled palette to appease as many members as possible. The choice of glazes provided is constantly revisited based on popularity, price, stability, colour, gloss and transparency. Some studio glazes have properties limiting their effectiveness and are best used with specific purposes. Where this is the case, studio glazes have information attached. (e.g. "glaze is very runny, not food safe")
- Glaze materials change price, composition and availability resulting in some glazes no longer being offered or a change in appearance. These factors are beyond the LPG's control. Please be understanding.

### Using Glazes

Foreign materials introduced to glazes and use without proper mixing cause unpredictable glaze behaviour and colour. Caution and care should be taken to avoid glaze contamination.

- If double dipping is necessary or desired, ensure the first glaze is dry before dipping.
- It is preferable to use a separate, smaller container for the second glaze so as to not contaminate the main glaze. If this small container is not contaminated dump it back in with the main glaze.

The above is especially important if you are dipping a strongly coloured glaze such as a red into a pail of white glaze. The large amount of iron in a red glaze will contaminate a white or light-coloured glaze very easily.

### **Commercial Glazes**

Occasionally, some studio users will desire to work with specialty glazes or products not available through the studio (e.g. resists, stains or commercial glazes). Such products may be used in our studio.

For convenience, and safety the LPG strongly recommends that studio users make use of studio glazes as often as possible.

- When firing a commercial glaze (or any new batch of glaze) for the first time, it is required that an appropriate test tile be utilized or that the work be fired on a tile or broken piece of kiln shelf to protect the kiln.
- There is no reduction in clay costs if you provide your own glazes.

### **Clay**

The studio clay is Tuckers Mid-Smooth Stone (MSS) – an off-white light creamy clay designed for ease of throwing and handbuilding. This is available for sale to LPG members only. Boxes of MSS are available and stored for ease of access on the first floor. You may purchase clay from the store during store hours. After hours please pay for the clay and fill in the payment form. Debit, credit, cash or cheque may be used to pay for your clay. Place money or cheques in an envelope and drop it into the white mailbox opposite the coat closet on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

- Not more than 4 boxes will be sold to an individual at any one time.
- Clay prices include the cost of glazes, bisque firing, one glaze firing, shipping, handling, storage, kiln maintenance, and taxes. (Currently the cost of kiln replacement is not included and prices may be adjusted as costs become clearer.)
- Work can be refired to fix glaze flaws. If refiring is to be done for effect a fee will be charged (See Technician).
- Clay is not to be sold to non-guild members under any circumstances.
- A limited supply of other Δ6 clays (red, speckled, grey, black, porcelain) is stocked as well. These specialty clays are priced accordingly and may not always be available.

### **Clay Costs and Tools**

- Studio Clay (MSS): \$30.51 [Sleeve] / \$61.02 [Box] (HST included)
- Specialty Clay: \$32.77 [Sleeve] / \$65.54 [Box] (HST included)
- Reclaimed Clay is for classes only
- Tools may be purchased from the store: Basic tool kit \$15 / Individual tools: prices vary

### **Firing**

- Clay not purchased through the LPG may only be fired with the rental of kiln space. Rental is per firing not per work. One booking and payment for bisque firing and a second booking and payment for glaze firing.

- Kiln rental must be scheduled two weeks in advance and is subject to the Studio Technician's approval. Proof of payment (to the Technician) is required prior to loading.
- Rental fee is paid through the store.
- If a specific firing ramp or temperature is desired, please work with the Technician to ensure proper programming of the kiln.
- Kilns may not be rented during certain times of the year:
  - Within two weeks of classes ending.
  - Within two weeks of a group sale. (LPG, Home County etc.)
- Additional charges will be applied if the following occur:
  - The Technician or kiln loading committee has to load or unload.
  - If repair is needed for kiln or kiln furniture.
  - If the kiln is not loaded or unloaded within the scheduled time.

### **Kiln Rental Costs**

Low temperature range (bisque, luster etc.)

\$15+HST half kiln

\$30+HST entire kiln

Mid temperature range (glaze firing up to Δ6)

\$35+HST half kiln

\$65+HST entire kiln

The above prices are for the round kilns only; for pricing on the oval and front-loading kilns please see Studio Technician.

### **Non Studio Clay and Non Studio Members Clay Work**

Firing of clay items from outside (e.g. from non-guild members, guests, relatives) is strictly forbidden. Studio members who try to fire clay items formed by non-guild members or formed of clay not purchased through our studio are subject to disciplinary action which may include monetary charges and/or a revoking of their guild membership (see "Failure To Comply")

### **Signing of Work**

All work to be fired must be signed with the members name or symbol.

- Unsigned work will not be fired and will be moved to a bottom shelf and have note indicating this placed with it.
- Be aware that pencil or ink will burn off in the kiln. You must sign with a stamp, indented signature, or an underglaze pencil.

### **Technician's Role Regarding Firing**

The Technician's role regarding firings at the LCAC is to ensure that program work is cycled through the kilns in a timely manner (2 week turn around). The Technician is not responsible for the timely firing of members' work. The kiln committee is responsible for this under the supervision of the Technician.

- If you feel your work is not being fired in a timely manner, take ownership. Take part in the Studio Potter Program or ask the kiln committee for training so you may assist in the loading and unloading of kilns.

### **Breakage**

The LCAC is a communal studio and pottery will break. If you feel your work is delicate, or that you cannot risk its loss (e.g. it is part of a set) please take personal responsibility for it.

- Keep the work on your shelf until you or someone you personally ask can load it directly.
- If you accidentally break someone's work, please leave an apologetic note.

### **Drying Work in the Kiln Room**

The kiln room is not an extension of your rented shelf or studio space where you can dry work.

- Only bone dry, ready to load work is to be placed in the kiln room. If wet work is found in the kiln room it may be removed and left in the general studio.
- If work cracks or damages other people's work because it has been fired too wet, it is the responsibility of the maker not the kiln loader.

### **Raku Firing**

Raku equipment is available for use by the LCAC studio users but currently can only be used during communal raku events. To learn more about firing raku speak to the Studio Technician. Note that the Studio Technician cannot supervise individual raku sessions.

### **Final Notes on Firing**

If you feel that your pottery is not being fired, or is being damaged in the kiln room, you may have to take further ownership and help out in the kiln room. If you wish to load a kiln of your own work and know how, please book a kiln (see above and speak with the Technician).

Without booking, you may load up to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of any kiln with your own work providing you load the remaining  $\frac{2}{3}$  with either program (priority) or members' work. You may only load  $\frac{1}{3}$  of one kiln with your own work at any one time. If you do not know how to load kilns, please contact the Technician, see the kiln committee or take part in the Studio Potter Program.

## Clean Up: Respect Our Community Facility

The processes of cleaning our studio may differ from those utilized in other studios. Please familiarize yourself with our processes and if you are unsure of how or where to put or do something, please ask. Others will much rather answer your questions than clean up after you.

### Main Studio Clean Up

It is illegal to dry sweep clay or glaze dust (dust that contains silica) according to Ontario Health and Safety Laws. Always utilize wet mopping and damp cleaning methods.

**“Silica in the respirable form is a designated substance under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the subject of a specific Regulation. This Regulation applies in part or in whole to workplaces in which silica is present, produced, processed, used, handled or stored.”**

[http://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/SilicaWorkplace\\_Final.pdf?ext=.pdf](http://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/SilicaWorkplace_Final.pdf?ext=.pdf)

*If proper cleaning, handling and storage procedures and processes are followed silica will have zero negative effect on your health.*

Please familiarize yourself with the information found under “Working With Clay”.

### **Processes**

- Sponge-clean your chair, wheel, foot pedal, table surface, wedging table, glaze area and communal tools/equipment. Anywhere you have worked, walked or dripped.
- Clay does not clean with one wipe. You must eliminate dust by double wiping all surfaces with clean water.
- Place stool and pedal on top of the wheel.
- Return splash pan etc. to the wheel. It is ok to return them wet.
- Do not sweep the floor. Pick up large pieces of clay and discard in garbage cans.
- Sponge large messes and damp mop the floors around your entire work area. (wheel, table, sinks, etc.)
- Please ensure you leave the mop clean after use.
- To avoid contamination, clay that has been on the floor must NOT be put into the reclaim buckets.
- Wash bats, ware boards and tools both front and back before putting away. They may be put away wet.
- DO NOT ASSUME OTHERS STILL WORKING WILL BE HAPPY TO CLEAN UP YOUR MESS – THEY WILL NOT.

### Glaze Area Clean Up

The glaze area presents various potential hazards due to the nature of glaze composition. Please familiarize yourself with the information found under “Working With Glaze and Glazing.” If proper processes and procedures are followed, our glaze area is a safe, clean, creative place to work.

## **Processes**

- Before waxing and glazing, you may wish to cover surfaces with newspaper to facilitate easier and faster cleanup.
- When finished glazing, ensure all surfaces are washed and dust free. This includes outside surfaces of glaze buckets and dollies.
- Scrape and wipe the inside of glaze buckets down to the level of the liquid glaze.
- Clean all brushes and sponges in sink ensuring all glazes and colourants etc. are removed.
- Ensure tools used for mixing, etc. are clean before putting them away. They may be put away wet.
- Using clean water, wash the floors around the glaze table and sinks.
- Any drips or footprints leading away from the glaze area are your responsibility as well. (e.g. leading to the washroom or kiln room)
- Do not utilize glaze areas or equipment for any purpose other than glazing.
- Do not utilize tools intended for food or raw clay in the glaze area.

## Equipment

### Common Use Equipment

Our studio supports a wide range of processes and techniques. We encourage an environment where no one clay process takes precedence over another; the ability to use techniques that are thousands of years old is as important as those being developed today. Safety, technical effectiveness, quality of work and environmental consciousness are the chief principles that govern our facility, equipment and practices.

The studio has a variety of equipment for common use:

- 9 wheels
- slab roller
- extruder
- handbuilding tables
- wedging tables (slate, plaster and wood)
- a variety of studio glazes (Δ6)
- a variety of studio slips
- assortment of bats, ware boards, rolling pins, canvas-covered work boards
- kitchen facilities – microwave, coffee pots – but remember the “clean what you use” rule is implied and do not store items in the fridge for more than that day’s use.

### Areas & Equipment for Authorized Personnel

Certain areas and equipment are to be utilized by authorised personnel only. Those who wish to be trained on the proper and safe use of particular area or equipment listed below may speak to the Studio Technician, the service committee from that area and/or the Coordinator of the Studio Potter Program.

- 50+ cubic feet of electric kiln space
- 2 portable raku kits
- fully stocked glaze kitchen with assorted tools and equipment for glaze mixing
- pug mill

### Maintenance

Any working studio and its equipment will require periodic maintenance. Minor repair to studio facilities, equipment and accessories (replacing elements, repairing wheels, grinding shelves, etc.) is to be completed by the Studio Technician. Notify the Technician immediately of any issues regarding repairs. Repair beyond the scope of knowledge or technical ability of the Studio Technician will be performed by an outside professional.

## **Movement of Clay Work**

### **Dry Work**

- Dry work, which is ready to be fired, may be placed on the “To Be Bisqued” shelves located in the kiln room.
- Work that has special requirements must have directional notes or is to be loaded by the maker. (e.g. “Please fire lying down.” or “Please fire lid on.” etc.)

### **Bisqued Work**

- First fired work will be placed on the communal bisque pick up shelf located across from the kiln room.
- Work should be picked up within two weeks. The longer the work sits there, the more likely it is to be damaged.
- At the end of one month, all work will be marked, at the end of the following month, any work still present becomes the property of the LCAC to be used for fundraising or disposed of immediately.

### **Glazed Work**

- Glazed work is to be placed on the “To Be Glazed” shelves located in the kiln room. Work that has special requirements must have directional notes or is to be loaded by the maker. (e.g. “Please fire on tile” or “Please fire lid off” etc.)
- Glazed work must be clean on the bottom and high enough on the sides to account for running.
- If your work runs onto a shelf you will be responsible for grinding the shelf or the purchase of a new kiln shelf. Further work of yours will not be fired until this repair/replacement is complete.
- To promote a community atmosphere, no more than 1/3 of one kiln (at any one time) can be of one members work. If more space is required, the entire kiln must be booked or rented. Contact the Technician or see above under “Firing” for further information.
- Work that is glaze fired will be placed on the communal finished work shelf located across from the kiln room.
- Work should be picked up within two weeks. The longer the work sits there, the more likely it is to be damaged.
- At the end of one month, all work will be marked, at the end of the following month, any work still present becomes the property of the LCAC to be used for fundraising or disposed of immediately.

### **Work With Issues**

- You may find your work on a bottom shelf in the kiln room or pickup area with a note indicating there is an issue with it. If you do, simply correct the issue and place the work back on the appropriate shelf. Issues could include: glaze on bottom of pot, not signed, glaze too thick or peeling off, pot cracked or broken.
- Accidents happen despite best efforts. Please be forgiving if your work is damaged. Out of respect, please leave an apologetic note if you damage someone else’s work.

## The Role of Staff

### Studio Technician

The responsibilities of the LCAC Studio Technician include but are not limited to:

- Growing community outreach, partnerships and developing new/ongoing opportunities.
- Liaise with and facilitate the work of all other LPG staff, members, and volunteers at London Clay Art Centre
- Load and unload kilns with members', workshops and class work
- Manage Kiln Loading Committee; provide training in conjunction with Studio Potter Program Coordinator and create work schedule
- Order materials and supplies and ensure delivery and appropriate storage
- Maintain and control inventory: first-in, first-out process
- Mix glazes and ensure continuous replenishment as needed
- Manage Glaze Making Committee; provide training in conjunction with Studio Potter Program Coordinator and create work schedule
- Maintain kilns and wheels in good working order
- Make recommendations for equipment replacement or new equipment purchases as appropriate
- Ensure sufficient tools and supplies available for classes and members
- Empty clay sludge from sink traps as needed
- Ensure clay sludge is extracted by truck 2X annually or as appropriate
- Mentor and supervise summer student job placements as appropriate
- Ensure studio users, including instructors, adhere to appropriate health and safety standards and practices (WHMIS)
- Ensure studio users are observing proper studio etiquette (e.g. use of space, hygiene) and are adhering to the LPG Code of Conduct
- Other duties as required

The Studio Technician reports directly to the President of the Board of Directors, until such time as we hire an Executive Director. Any comments, questions or concerns regarding the studio should first be directed to the Studio Technician. If a non-satisfactory answer is provided or the topic requires more attention, contact the President or place your quandary in the "comment box" located across from the coat closet on the first floor. The LPG President reads all quandaries/comments and responds appropriately in accordance with directives set by the Board of Directors.

## **Office Administrator**

The responsibilities of the LCAC Office Administrator are vast; they include but are not limited to:

- Assisting in the efficient running of the business aspects of the studio.
- Assisting all committees, staff and working groups as much as scheduling allows.
- Maintaining the LCAC website.
- Reconciling accounts.
- Preparing reports and promotional materials.
- Communications to the membership.

If you require the Administrator's assistance, please be considerate and give as much notice as possible to allow for efficient scheduling of time.

If your quandary is for a specific area of the LCAC or LPG please seek out a member of the service committee or staff working directly within that area and direct your quandary there.

Our Office Administrator reports directly to the President of the Board of Directors until such time as we hire an Executive Director. Any comments, questions or concerns regarding this role should be sent to the President or placed in the "comment box" located across from the coat closet on the first floor. The LPG President reads all quandaries/comments and responds appropriately in accordance with directives set by the Board of Directors.

## **Program Coordinator**

The responsibilities of the LCAC Program Coordinator include but are not limited to:

- Managing new and existing program offerings.
- Growing community outreach, partnerships and developing new/ongoing opportunities.
- Managing program-related communications through media relations, social media, etc.
- Maintaining the LCAC website with updated program details and registration information.

Our Program Coordinator reports directly to the President of the Board of Directors until such time as we hire an Executive Director. Any comments, questions or concerns regarding programming should first be directed to the Program Coordinator. If a non-satisfactory answer is provided or the topic requires more attention, contact the President or place your quandary in the "comment box" located across from the coat closet on the first floor. The LPG President reads all quandaries/comments and responds appropriately in accordance with directives set by the Board of Directors.

## **Executive Director**

Description to come.

### **Other Staff/Volunteer Workers**

At times we have additional staff working for the LPG with specific duties. These individuals have set responsibilities and tasks assigned to them by their supervisors. Some will be our members and some will be with us from various agencies (e.g. Job Creation Program run by HRSDC, Y.O.U. etc.) and are here to gain work experience. Others will be professionals contracted for specific duties. Our Code of Conduct extends to these individuals. Please be considerate of their time and answer questions if they have any. Direct any concerns, questions or comments to their supervisor or the President of the Board of Directors.

### **Artists in Residence**

The LCAC provides an opportunity for one International Artist In Residence and One Canadian Artist in Residence (AIR). The positions are filled by people with considerable expertise and/or education in some aspect of clay work who desire a professional studio wherein they can further their personal body of work. The Artists in Residence are available for scheduled consultation, guidance, and critique and will also spend some time contributing to the running of the studio. Each AIR is expected to give a workshop(s) on their area of expertise and may also teach classes. In return the AIR receives studio space, clay and firing.

The Artist-In-Residence will post hours in which she/he is available for consultation. Except for brief technical questions or emergencies, please do not disturb the AIR while she/he is engaged in their personal body of work.

Further information and an introduction to our Artist(s)-In-Residence can be found on our website.

## Health and Safety

### Safety in the Studio

The studio is a working space akin to any other workshop where activities and practices affect other people and may be potentially dangerous. It must be respected and treated appropriately. If you see anything that seems unsafe, stop and seek information. Health and safety information is posted beside the glaze area sink.

### General Studio Safety Rules

- Dry sanding of clay at any stage, (dry, bisque, glazed) is prohibited in our facility. If you must sand, proper wet sanding processes are required.
- When mixing glazes, a 3M Half Face Respirator with P-100 cartridges (available from Tuckers or PSH) or a fitted N95 mask must be worn. We recommend that all studio members who mix glaze purchase their own respirator.
- Gloves should be worn when glazing if you are
  - of childbearing age,
  - are sensitive to metals,
  - or have health difficulties that need not be exacerbated.
- Wear stable, comfortable shoes and comfortable clothing with nothing loose or hanging (jewelry, drawstrings) that may get caught in machinery or in the wheels.
- Long hair should be tied back.
- Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times and must never enter the glaze kitchen.
- No running in the studio.
- Wet floors are slippery! Take care after mopping and utilize the wet floor signs.
- Ensure proper training on all equipment prior to use.

### Areas of Safety Concern

Working in a clay art studio has a variety of hazards which users should be aware of. The specific precautions and hazards can be grouped into three areas: working with clay, glazes and glazing, and kilns and firing.

### Working With Clay

Clays are composed of hydrated aluminum silicates, often containing large amounts of crystalline silica. Other impurities may include organic matter or sulphur compounds. Sometimes grog (ground firebrick), sand, talc, vermiculite, perlite, and small amounts of minerals such as barium carbonate and metal oxides, are added by manufacturers to modify clay properties. Many of these components present potential hazards.

### **Hazards**

- **SILICOSIS** (also known as miner's lung, Grinder's Disease and Potter's Rot) is a form of occupational lung disease caused by inhalation of crystalline silica dust. Silicosis is a progressive, debilitating and often-fatal lung disease. Silicosis is an irreversible condition. When small silica dust particles are inhaled, they embed themselves deeply into the tiny alveolar sacs and ducts in the lungs where oxygen

and carbon dioxide gases are exchanged. Once these are blocked, they cannot be cleared and breathing becomes laboured or prevented.

- Silica is a main component of clay. Clay on the floor or other surfaces will dry and pulverize into fine dust. Walking on this will stir up microscopic grains of silica into the air. Dry sweeping the floor or tables in a clay studio causes the same issues. Once airborne, inhalation is unavoidable.
- Sand, perlite, grog, and vermiculite (all potentially used in our studio) also contain free silica and are, therefore, highly toxic by inhalation.
- Sanding finished green-ware, can create very high concentrations of hazardous silica dust.
- Wet silica does not become airborne and therefore is not a health hazard.
- Vermiculite is also frequently contaminated with asbestos.
- Nyltal brand talc also contained asbestos. This is no longer being sold. Our stocked talc does not contain asbestos.
- Pneumonia, asthma, skin irritation or other problems may occur with exposure to mould growing in wet clay that is being soured or aged in a damp place, or with inhalation of dry aged clay containing spores.
- Improper position while throwing on a potter's wheel for long periods of time may result in carpal tunnel syndrome or other repetitive strain injuries. Pain, numbness and/or pins and needles in the thumb and first three fingers, are common symptoms.
- Back problems may arise from improperly bending over the potter's wheel for long periods of time.
- Clay is heavy and if lifted improperly can cause injury.

### **Precautions and Procedures**

Protective measures such as respirators and masks have brought a steady decline in death rates due to silicosis in western countries. The best way to prevent silicosis is to identify workplace activities that produce crystalline silica dust and then to eliminate or control the dust.

*If precautions and procedures set out below are adhered to, we can maintain control over our dust and prevent clay and silica hazards in our studio.*

- Use wet or damp cleaning methods on all surfaces and tools utilized for clay.
- Use premixed clay, such as that sold at LPG, to avoid exposure to large quantities of clay dust.
- Wear separate work clothes while in the studio. Choose clothes of material and design that don't trap dust. Wash these clothes weekly and separate from other laundry.
- Avoid contact of clay with broken skin. Use a skin moisturizer.
- To prevent back problems, always lift with knees bent. Exercise and massage may relieve minor muscular pain.
- Keep wrists in a non-flexed position as much as possible to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome or other repetitive strain injuries. Take frequent work breaks.
- If you are feeling pain you are using improper positions/techniques and should seek advice.

- Finish green ware while still wet or damp with a fine sponge instead of sanding when dry.
- Wet sand if sanding is necessary.
  - Wet your clay, bisque or vitrified clay so that that as you sand dust becomes a paste rather than airborne.
  - Wet sandpaper is designed not to fall apart when used with water and may be purchased at any hardware store.
  - An unglazed piece of vitrified clay or sanding stone works well to wet sand other clay.
  - When wet sanding is complete, the “paste” is washed off and into the sink preventing a dust inhalation hazard.
  - This also avoids that lovely “nails on the chalkboard” sensation!
- Wet mop floors and work surfaces daily with clean water and to avoid dust build up.

### **Working With Glazes and Glazing**

Glazing is most often the finishing step in clay work. As glazes are comprised of materials that may be considered harmful or hazardous to health and the environment, care should be taken in using them. This section outlines information related to glazes and glazing with which all users should be familiar.

#### **What Is a Glaze?**

Glazes (glass) used to colour or finish coat clay pieces are basically a mixture of **silica**, **fluxes** and **colourants**. Not all of the materials listed/mentioned below are ingredients of the LCAC studio glazes. You may however, encounter them on your clay journey. Please consult the recipes to find out what materials and compounds comprise specific LCAC glazes. There are MSDS (material safety data sheets) available for all the components of the glazes located in the glaze kitchen.

**Silica** is the main glass in glazes. It also binds to the silica in the clay giving the permanent adhesion of glaze to clay. Silica has a very high melting point. Common **fluxes** including lithium, calcium and sodium, and are used to lower this melting point so that the glaze melts at the same temperature the clay’s vitrification point. Vitrification is when the clay transforms into as waterproof of a rock as possible.

An assortment of metal oxides or other metal compounds are most commonly used as glaze **colourants**. These colourants dissolve into the glass as it melts and combine with other materials to change form and produce colour effects on our pots. When the glass cools these colours are trapped in the glass for our visual enjoyment. Glaze colourants are added in such small amounts, that the wet or fired glazes are not usually a great hazard.

#### **Hazards**

Some metals will cause glazes to leach or have inherent hazards and therefore need be handled and used properly.

- Manganese allowed to enter the bloodstream can cause Parkinson's-disease like symptoms.
- Lustre and metallic glazes are often fired in a reduction atmosphere, such as in raku firing. These glazes often contain mercury, arsenic, highly toxic solvents such as aromatic and chlorinated hydrocarbons, and oils.
- Some under-glazes and over-glazes use mineral spirits as the vehicle instead of water. Prolonged inhalation or skin contact with mineral spirits can cause short-term health hazards from vomiting to rashes.
- Lead compounds are highly toxic by inhalation or ingestion. Symptoms of lead poisoning include: damage to the peripheral nervous system, brain, kidney, or gastrointestinal system, as well as anaemia, chromosomal damage, birth defects and miscarriages.
- Certain colorant compounds of particular metals are known or probable human carcinogens, including: arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, chromium (VI), nickel, and uranium.
- Antimony, cobalt, lead, lithium, manganese, and vanadium colorant compounds are highly toxic by inhalation.
- Antimony, arsenic, chromium, vanadium, and nickel compounds are moderately toxic by skin contact.
- Free silica occurs in many of the clays, ash, flint, quartz feldspars, talcs, etc. used in glazes. (See the discussion above for the hazards of silica and the disease silicosis. Preparing glazes can result in the inhalation of toxic materials.
- Soda ash, potassium carbonate, alkaline feldspars, and fluorspar used in glazes are skin irritants.
- Spray application of glazes without proper equipment and procedure is very hazardous due to potential inhalation of glaze mists.
- Glazes containing solvents are both flammable and hazardous.
- Glazes that are crazed (or crackled) are not to be used on surfaces in contact with wet food. The small cracks can expose metals that can leach into foods (particularly acidic foods) and could, over time, cause toxic effects. As well, the small cracks can trap bacteria and cause spoilage of the food or illness if not properly sanitized.

### Precautions

- Use only lead-free glazes. If the commercial glaze does not state "lead-free" or "leadless" on the label, assume it contains lead until proven otherwise. **All the glazes in the LCAC studio are lead-free. There is no lead in the building.**
- If possible, do not use colorants that are known human carcinogens and avoid probable human carcinogens. There is no known safe level of exposure to carcinogens.
- Use of lustres should be done while in a well-ventilated room away from other people and while wearing a Half Face Respirator with 3M Organic Vapour Respirator Cartridges. (Respirator can be purchased from PPSH or Tuckers; filters are available on Amazon)
- Use only wet cleaning practices for areas and tools that have been utilized for glazing.

- Wear a respirator and utilize the venting system when weighing and mixing powdered ingredients.
- Wet glazes are not an inhalation hazard.
- Good housekeeping procedures and wet cleanup of spills all but eliminate the risk of inhalation of toxic dusts.
- Thoroughly wash hands, arms and exposed skin after glazing.
- NEVER eat or drink in the glaze area or glaze kitchen.
- Gloves should be worn while handling any wet or dry glazes if you
  - are at all sensitive to heavy metals,
  - of childbearing age
  - or have health complications that need not be exasperated.
- If you are not sure of the food safety of a studio glaze, please consult our Technician.

### **Unused Glazes and Glaze Waste**

Any glaze left over from normal studio practice is considered glaze waste. This may come from a wide variety of sources, e.g. brushes, drips or splatter on floor or table surfaces, rinse buckets, etc.. All glaze waste should enter the recycling program via the glaze waste bin or glaze area sink.

### **Wax and Resists**

Wax and resists are used prior to glazing to keep glaze off the underside of work or to keep an area glaze free for aesthetic reasons.

Glaze remaining on the bottom of work will melt and bond to the kiln shelf upon firing. Kiln shelves are expensive to replace and arduous to repair. Please be conscious of your glazing and place your work on a tile or clay cookie if you are unsure of your glaze.

- When waxing, use only dedicated wax brushes and rinse thoroughly with hot water and soap.
- Do not use solid or melted wax in the studio – liquid wax is supplied. (Paraffin and other waxes when heated to a steaming temperature are carcinogenic.)
- The studio liquid (mobilcer) wax has been coloured with food colouring (which will burn off in the kiln) so you can see where you have applied the wax.

### **Kilns and Firing**

Electric kilns and fuel-fired kilns are used to heat pottery to the desired firing temperature. Essentially, the kilns transform the clay into rock through a similar process to those in the natural environment.

Heating elements heat the electric (**oxidation**) kiln as electric current passes through the coils. The temperature rises over approximately 12 hours until the kiln is shut off.

Fuel-fired kilns (**atmospheric or reduction**), such as our raku kilns and gas kilns, are heated by combustion. Gas (natural or propane) and wood are the most common fuels. These kilns may be located indoors or outdoors depending on their inherent properties and ventilation systems.

Firing temperatures can vary from as low as 1,382°F for raku and bisque wares, to as high as 2,372 °F for stoneware, and 2,642 °F for certain porcelains.

## Hazards

There are many hazards that present themselves when firing pottery.

- The early stages of bisque firing involve the oxidation of organic clay matter to carbon monoxide and other combustion gases.
- Sulphur breaks down later producing highly irritating sulphur oxides.
- Nitrates and nitrogen-containing organic matter break down to nitrogen oxides.
- Lead (Galena), cornish stone, crude feldspars, low grade fire clays, fluorspar, gypsum, lepidolite and cryolite can release toxic gases/ fumes during glaze firings.
- Carbonates, chlorides, and fluorides are broken down to release carbon dioxide, chlorine, and fluorine gases.
- Many metal fumes generated at high temperatures are toxic if inhalation occurs.
- Carbon monoxide from fuel-fired kilns or the combustion of organic matter in clays is highly toxic by inhalation and can cause oxygen starvation. One symptom of carbon monoxide poisoning is an intense frontal headache, unrelieved by analgesics (pain-killers like Aspirin or Advil).
- Hot kilns produce infrared radiation, which is hazardous to the eyes. There have been reports of cataracts from years of looking inside the hot kilns.
- Heat generated by the kiln can cause thermal burns. The Edward Orton Jr. Ceramic Foundation reported that when a kiln was operated at 2370 °F, the surface temperature of the kiln was at or above 595 °F, and the temperature one foot away from the peephole was 156 °F.
- Heat produced by even small electric kilns can cause fires in the presence of combustible materials or flammable liquids.
- Kiln room temperatures often exceed 100 °F even with proper ventilation.

## Precautions

- Do not attempt to operate a kiln unless you have been fully trained to do so.
- Due to off gassing both kiln types must be properly vented.
- Do not use lead compounds ever.
- If purchasing or adopting pre-made glazes ensure that they are clearly labeled lead-free.
- If a commercial product says it contains lead but is “food-safe” it is not allowed in the LCAC studio or to be fired in our kilns.
- We do not use cones while firing so do not look through the kiln peep holes as this can be hazardous.
- Lumber, paper, solvents, paints or other combustible and flammable materials must not be stored in kiln areas.
- Always check that the kiln has shut off.
- If gas leaks are suspected (e.g. gas odour): shut off gas at the source; shut off power to the kiln room at the circuit breaker; and call the gas company.
- Look at the display on the kiln to see if it is too hot to touch. If not sure, stay clear.

*If the above policies and procedures are utilized by all members every time they are in the studio, we will continue to have and grow a safe, creative, world class London Potters Guild studio at the London Clay Art Centre.  
Please enjoy our studio safely, cautiously, and fully!*

## Key Contacts

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
President	Judy Sparkes	jude@fullcirclepottery.com
Studio Technician		studiotech@londonpottersguild.org
Membership Coordinator	Laila Brandt	lailart@live.ca
Membership Engagement Committee Coordinator	Robin Chacko	rlcpottery@gmail.com
Studio Potter Program Coordinator	Elly Pakalnis	ellyph2003@yahoo.com



This manual is a working document and may be updated with new information and policies as needed.