



London Clay Art Centre Studio-Users' Manual

London Clay Art Centre is Owned & Operated by The London Potters Guild

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This manual is a working document. It will be updated with new information, policies and procedures as required.

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The London Potters Guild and London Clay Art Centre

The London Potters Guild (LPG) is the legal charitable entity that owns and operates London Clay Art Centre (LCAC). The LPG was registered as a charity in 1981 and was incorporated in 2002. The LPG purchased 664 Dundas St. in March 2008 and renovated it over five years to become LCAC.

1. What does it mean to be a studio-user at LCAC?

It is a privilege to be a studio-user at London Clay Art Centre. Studio-users are expected to work together to help each other develop as artists. We function as a cooperative, generously sharing space and giving time and skills to benefit fellow artists.

Belief, Vision, and Mission

Why does LCAC exist?

We believe that working with clay empowers people to embrace their inner creativity, transforming how they feel about themselves, and the connection between art and community-building.

Vision Statements

10 Year – By 2031, we are an internationally recognized centre of excellence for the education, practice, preservation, and appreciation of the ceramic art form.

25 Year - We will be an influencer, bringing the importance of ceramics into the consciousness of every Canadian.

Pitch for vision: We are on a journey to become an internationally recognized centre of excellence for the education, practice, preservation, and appreciation of the ceramic art form. We will be a national influencer, bringing ceramics into the consciousness of every Canadian.

Mission Statement

We aspire to give all people access to exceptional educational, artistic, and community-building experiences with clay and ceramic art.

The Philosophy of Our Studio

We are a welcoming, friendly group of clay artists 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-users' manual is to foster a safe and efficient studio and to introduce new studio-users to the guidelines and policies of LCAC's 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 conflict resolution
- preparation for working in a community studio environment
- technical and safety guidance

**Studio policy is based on the contents of this manual and our Global 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.

- An electronic copy is available upon registration and request.
- Printed copies are located under the sales counter in the store and on the bulletin board.
- A digital copy is available at <https://www.londonclayartcentre.org/studio-users--affiliates.html>

If studio-users consistently use the following policies and procedures we will continue to have a safe, creative, world-class studio at London Clay Art Centre.

About the Studio at London Clay Art Centre

Key fobs are assigned to studio-users to allow entry from the parking lot off Elizabeth Street (north entrance) and the front (south) entrance off Dundas St. through the LCAC Store. Studio access must be renewed in September each year in September.

How to Get Full Studio Access

The main floor at LCAC is open to studio-users. Studio use is not permitted until the following prerequisites have been met. You may be asked to provide examples of work to demonstrate your level of ability and knowledge.

- You are at least 18 years of age or have written consent from a parent or guardian;
- You have completed at least 72 hours of instruction at LCAC and have been recommended by your last LCAC instructor as someone who is ready to transition into independent use of the facility;
- You have equivalent training or experience from another clay facility (at least 72 hours of instruction) with a written recommendation by an external person as having the skills necessary to function in a shared studio environment;
- You have a written recommendation from a ceramics teacher from a school such as Bealart or Sheridan College.
- You have taken a mandatory 3-hour LCAC studio training session.
- You have successfully passed a 4-month probationary period with limited hours of access to the LCAC studio.
- You have paid your studio-user dues.

By submitting an application for studio-use privileges at London Clay Art Centre, you agree to be bound by the terms of the LPG/LCAC Global Code of Conduct, and further agree that any contravention of the Global Code of Conduct may result in the suspension or termination of studio-use privileges.

For more detailed information, please refer to the Operational Policies and Procedures manual.

As demands on the LCAC studio grow, the Executive Director reserves the right to limit the number of studio-users accepted into the program.

New Studio User Training Program

There are three (3) phases to LCAC's New Studio User Training Program: 1) application with prerequisites (see above); 2) mandatory 3-hour training session; 3) 4-month probationary period.

LCAC offers up to three annual intakes. The dates are set at the discretion of the Administrator and according to demand.

It is mandatory for all new Studio-User applicants to attend a 3-hour training session at LCAC for a fee. We try to offer one evening and one daytime slot for each intake period. If you are unable to attend either date, you will have to wait until the next intake.

At the training session you will learn about important health and safety considerations while working in a shared clay studio, as well as the answers to many questions that will help you become a valuable studio-user who makes a positive contribution to the running of the facility.

After the mandatory training session, you will pay a \$20 deposit fee for an LCAC key fob and the studio-user fee for the 4-month probationary period. During that period, you are permitted limited hours of access each day of the week

During your 4-month probation, experienced studio users working in the LCAC studio can answer your questions and provide guidance to help you become more familiar with the facility and its procedures. experienced studio users will also be taking note of your performance with respect to studio hygiene, use of space, and following the LPG/LCAC Global Code of Conduct, etc.

If you successfully complete the 4-month probationary period, you will be given full studio-use privileges.

The Studio

All LCAC clay artists, and staff 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. They are based on the experience and knowledge gathered over the 40-year history of the organization. If you need clarification about anything, please feel free to ask an experienced studio user or the appropriate staff person at LCAC. Please direct any questions about management, governance, or facilities to the Executive Director and General Manager.

General Guidelines

- Emergency procedures and contacts are posted on the large bulletin board across from the potter's wheels.
- An abbreviated version of the Global Code of Conduct is posted on both floors at LCAC and can be found in the binders along with this Studio-Users' Manual.
- A list of LCAC staff and their contact information is posted on the bulletin boards on both floors of the facility.
- At all times, be respectful of other studio-users, LCAC staff, the studio space, materials, and equipment.
- Unless absolutely necessary, do not disturb studio-users or staff loading the kilns and performing other tasks necessary for the flow of work and functioning of the studio. People are often on a tight schedule. If you require assistance from staff or a studio-user 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 their responsibility. Please take a class or ask experienced studio users when they may have time to answer your questions. We offer a wide selection of classes and workshops to help you on your clay journey. This is part of what makes us an amazing studio!
- Please do not handle other people's unfinished pieces unless asked/directed to do so. (e.g. loading kilns)
- Please store personal items, work, tools, apron, etc. on your rented shelf/shelves only. Items left on shelves which have not been renewed at the beginning of the operating year (September) will become the property of LCAC.
- Do not use communal spaces or surfaces to store your things. Items left out or stored inappropriately will be discarded without further warning.
- For health and safety reasons, nothing can be stored under the rental shelves. Items stored under the shelves will be removed and discarded without further warning.
- To avoid falling hazards (health and safety concern), work in progress, containers, and additional shelving units placed on the top of LCAC shelves must not exceed 36 inches and must be adequately secured.
- Please ensure that all personal shelves are strong and properly secured. If they present a falling hazard you will be asked to remove or secure them or we will remove them.

- Please ensure the items on your shelf do not 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 is for wedging all colours of clay providing proper clean-up is done. Metal scrapers can be used on this table.
- Please be mindful of other studio-users' needs. Wedging tables are for clay preparation and not to be used for storage or as a work surface.
- Unless agreed to by all those within listening distance, music is to be kept at a level inaudible to others in the studio.
- There are a limited number of wheels and tables. Please share the space. Offer to condense your footprint when others are in need of work surfaces. Items and work left unattended for more than a few minutes may be removed or discarded.
- If you are leaving the building (e.g. to eat) you must clean before you go and reset when you return.
- When the studio is busy, artists who rent individual studios must defer space to LCAC studio-users.
- Please allow at least 30 minutes for clean-up. You may be charged a fee if others must clean-up 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 other'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).

LCAC's standard studio clay is a cone 6 stoneware body called Mid-Smooth Stone (MSS). Only MSS clay can be placed in the slurry bin. Other clays must go in the coloured clay scrap/ slurry bin, be reclaimed by you, or placed in the garbage.

- Pour all clay water into the studio sinks. The sinks have special traps installed to catch the remaining clay particles. Any pieces of clay you can pick up should not be left in the sinks, either keep them to reclaim them or throw them in the garbage.
- Prior to using the bathroom properly clean your hands at the studio sinks. This will avoid unnecessary clay smudges on doors and walls. Clay rinsed in the bathroom sinks can eventually cause major plumbing problems.

- **Dry sanding is prohibited.** Only wet sanding is allowed. (See “Silicosis” under “Hazards”). Inspect and clean your pots thoroughly before bisque firing. This will avoid the need to sand later.
- Only rinse food and drink dishes and cups in the kitchen sink. Organic matter rinsed into the studio sinks will rot and create a foul smell.
- Do not use the kiln room to dry green ware or dry your work. Only bone-dry or near bone-dry work may go onto the shelves in the kiln room for bisque firing. If your work cracks or explodes during firing because it was not sufficiently dry before loading, it is not the kiln loaders’ fault.
- When your work is ready for bisque firing, place it on a kiln room shelf marked “Bisque”.
- Glazed pieces can be placed on the kiln room shelves marked “Glaze”.
- For easy identification, write or stamp your name on each piece of work. **Unidentified pieces will not be fired.**
- In order for communal shelf space to function effectively, (green ware, bisque, glaze, finished) keep your work moving through the studio in a timely fashion. (see “Movement of Clay Work”)
- We suggest that you provide personal ware boards suited to your own work. Sign and store them on your shelf. For ease of cleaning and longevity, cover ware boards with plastic or paper before placing wet pieces on them.
- Dry pots will be removed from communal boards and placed on shelves. LCAC cannot provide boards or bats to accommodate all members at all times.
- Please do not keep communal tools (e.g. banding wheels, slump molds, etc.) on your personal shelves.
- Please immediately remove finished work. Do not store it on shelves at LCAC. (See “Glazed Work”)
- Unclaimed / abandoned work will become property of the LCAC and may be disposed of or sold in the seconds sale to ensure adequate room for active studio-users.
- If you are not going to glaze your 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 you have time to glaze it.
- Work remaining on the finished glaze or bisque shelves longer than 60 days will become LCAC’s property and may be used at LCAC’s discretion.
- 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 where they came from. It is ok to return them wet.
- Please dispose of newspapers covered with clay. Do not reuse because clay dust is a health and safety hazard. In addition, 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 white board located in the studio area and/or mention it to a member of the Glaze team. The team members or the Studio Coordinator & Technician will correct the issue.
- Do not thin or decant glazes unless you have been trained to do so for that specific glaze by the Studio Coordinator & Technician. Some glazes need to be thick or thin to ensure proper functionality.
- For health and safety reasons, LCAC recommends that all drinks be consumed from lidded containers.
- LCAC advises that studio users take precautions to avoid contaminating food and drinks with clay and other materials, such as glaze chemicals, used at LCAC. When not in use for meetings or other functions, please eat lunch/dinner in the clean and quiet meeting room on the second floor (Dundas Street end). There are refrigerators on both floors at LCAC and a microwave is available on the second floor.
- When the upstairs meeting room is being used for classes, workshops, or meetings, 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.
- You may borrow books and periodicals relating to clay, pottery and sculpting from the library, which is located in the upstairs meeting room.
- It is prohibited to smoke and vape inside London Clay Art Centre and within 9 meters of the north entrance (back or parking lot entrance). The facility's air intakes are located at the north end and will draw smoke throughout the building.
- If you are the last person to leave the building, please turn off the lights upstairs and down.

Volunteer Hours for Studio-Users

Talk to the Studio Coordinator & Technician about your specific interests and skills. There are several tasks and areas of need to which you may choose to volunteer (glaze making; kiln firing; clay reclamation; cleaning, etc.). Being part of a team will provide you with experience and knowledge in key areas of studio management. Conversely, if you have experience, you will have an opportunity to share your knowledge with others who need mentorship and guidance.

Volunteer hours help us continue to provide member benefits such as run two annual sales, biennial exhibitions, special events for showing and selling work, and myriad other components of running a large facility and complex organization that can only be achieved with the effort of many individuals.

Failure to Comply

If a studio user fails to comply with the rules, etiquette, guidelines, and protocol outlined in this document and in the *LPG/LCAC Global Code of Conduct*, the Studio Coordinator & Technician or Executive Director, will provide a verbal warning during which helpful suggestions will be given about how to change problematic behaviour. If non-compliance continues, the studio user will receive a written (hand or electronic) warning and be required to meet with the Executive Director. Depending on the severity of the situation and if a resolution cannot be achieved, the offending party, at the sole discretion of the Executive Director, may have their studio privileges restricted or revoked.

If there is property damage associated with a breach of the Global Code of Conduct, the cost of damages may be charged. No fees will be refunded.

How to Resolve an Issue or Initiate a Complaint Proceeding

For detailed information, please refer to the policy and procedure documents entitled Global Code of Conduct and Global Code of Conduct Complaint Procedure respectively in the LPG/LCAC Operational Policies and Procedures Manual. Copies are in folder holder beside the big bulletin board in the first floor studio.

Anyone who believes they have witnessed conduct or been treated contrary to the Global Code of Conduct may:

- Approach the person directly and request that their behaviour stop.
- Depending upon the severity of the complaint, notify the appropriate staff member and ask for help rectifying the situation. The most severe complaints should be directed to the Executive Director.
- In instances of violations of the Global Code of Conduct by LCAC's Executive Director (ED), contact the Board President.
- In instances of criminal behaviour, contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

To most effectively address complaints, they should be received in writing and include the signature of the complainant(s). The document should include details of the alleged behaviour including dates, times, places, names of individuals involved and any witnesses.

All issues brought forward will be treated as confidential.

Example of Resolution Process

A studio user 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 studio user 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, present the information in writing to the studio coordinator and technician. If the issue is still not resolved to your satisfaction, or if the Studio Coordinator & Technician deems it appropriate, one or both of you should inform the Executive Director either in writing or in person of the situation and any efforts made to resolve it. The Executive Director will consider all sides of the situation and formulate an appropriate resolution.

Becoming an Instructor at LCAC

If you are interested in becoming an LCAC instructor, please contact the Education and Exhibitions Manager for further information. You may be asked to provide a resume/CV of your teaching experience, plus references. A digital copy of our current Instructor Manual is available upon request.

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 classes and always off limits to children. The glaze kitchen can only be used by studio users who have been trained in glaze making either through the Studio Potter Program or under the supervision of instructors or the Studio Coordinator & Technician.
- If you wish to test glazes you must purchase the materials from suppliers or the LCAC.
- Test glazes must be placed on a secondary tile or tray to protect the kiln shelf from potential glaze flaws (e.g. unexpectedly runny glazes).
- LCAC studio glazes for general use will be remade as required by the glaze team . Please contact the Studio Coordinator & Technician for training or to assist.

Studio Glazes

- Up to 12 studio glazes are available to LCAC studio-users. They are stored under the tables in the glazing area. Each studio glaze is labelled by name. The glaze sample board in the glazing area indicates individual glaze colours as well as how they work when overlapped with each other.
- Studio glazes provide a wide yet controlled palette. Glaze recipes are continually assessed based on popularity, price, stability, colour, gloss, and transparency. Some studio glazes have properties limiting their effectiveness and are best used for specific purposes. studio glazes have information on the label with the name of the glaze. (e.g. “glaze is very runny, not food safe, only works in a certain firing, does not work with black clay, etc.”)
- The cost and availability of glaze materials can change, which may result in the discontinuation of certain glazes due to expense or an inability to create the desired colour. These factors are beyond LCAC’s control.

Using Glazes

Foreign materials introduced into glazes and used without proper mixing cause unpredictable glaze behaviour and colour. Use caution and care to avoid glaze contamination.

- If double dipping is necessary or desired, ensure the first glaze is dry before dipping again. When layering glazes, the glazes will run more than they normally would on their own, it is important NOT to double dip an entire piece, leave at least 1/3 of the height of the piece with only one glaze.

- When trying a new combination of glazes, especially if they are commercial glazes, you should do a test tile or fire the piece on a cookie as not all glazes combine well and glaze flaws are possible.
- If glaze flakes off of a piece when it dries or looks thick it will not be fired by the kiln team as it is likely to run, bubble, and even splatter onto other people's work in the kiln. The person who rejects the piece will leave a note explaining why it has not been loaded.
- It is preferable to use a separate, smaller container for the second glaze to avoid contaminating the main glaze. If the small container is not contaminated after use, dump it back into the main glaze mixture.

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

Commercial Glazes

Occasionally, some studio-users want to work with specialty glazes or products not available in the LCAC studio (e.g. resists, stains or commercial glazes). Such products may be used in our studio but, please use caution.

For convenience and safety, LCAC strongly recommends the use of studio glazes over external specialty glazes.

- When firing a commercial glaze (or any new batch of glaze) for the first time, place the test piece on bisque ware tile made specifically to protect the kiln shelf from damage due to runny glaze.
- Latex is not to be used as a resist at the LCAC due to allergies.
- Regardless of whether you purchase your own glazes or use LCAC's, the cost of clay purchased at LCAC will be the same.

Clay

The studio clay is Tucker's Mid-Smooth Stone (MSS) – an off-white light creamy clay designed for ease of throwing and handbuilding. This is available for sale to LCAC studio-users, Affiliates, and students only. Boxes of MSS are available and stored for ease of access on the first floor. You may purchase clay through the LCAC 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 slide it under the door to the Administrator's office.

- No 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.

- At the discretion of the Studio Coordinator & Technician, work may be re-fired to fix glaze flaws. If multiple glaze firings are required to achieve a desired aesthetic effect, an additional fee may be charged (See Technician).
- A limited supply of other cone 6 clays (red, speckled, grey, black, porcelain) are also stocked. Specialty clays are priced accordingly and may not always be available.

Clay Costs and Tools

- Studio clay (MSS): \$37.29per sleeve / \$74.58per box (HST included)
- Specialty clay: \$39.55sleeve / \$79.10per box (HST included)
- Reclaimed clay is for classes only
- Tools may be purchased from the store: Basic tool kit \$15 (HST included)/ Individual tools: prices vary
- Other tools or clay may be added to group orders and paid for in the store when they arrive. The Studio Coordinator and Technician will notify studio users and affiliate artists of upcoming orders at least one week before placing an order and will include instructions on how to add items onto the order. studio users and affiliate artists will be responsible for paying for shipping of items they order but shipping is much more cost effective when ordered as a group than individually.

Firing

- Clay not purchased through the LCAC may only be fired by renting kiln space. Rental cost is per firing, not per piece. You must book and pay for a bisque firing and then book and pay for a glaze firing. You also must pay for any glazes used on this clay. Alternatively, you may an upcharge of \$34 per box to cover firing, loading and unloading and glazes.
- Kiln rental must be scheduled two weeks in advance and is subject to the Studio Coordinator & Technician's approval. Proof of payment (to the Technician) is required prior to loading.
- Kiln rental fees are paid through the store.
- If a specific firing ramp or temperature is desired, please work with the Studio Coordinator & Technician to ensure proper kiln programming.
- Kilns may not be rented during certain times of the year:
 - Within one week of classes ending.
 - Within one week of a group sale. (Potters Market, Home County, etc.)
- Additional charges will be applied if the following occur:
 - The Technician or kiln loading team has to load or unload.
 - If your firing schedule is longer than our studio firing programs.

- If repair is needed for kiln or kiln furniture.
- If the kiln is not loaded or unloaded within the scheduled time.

ROUND KILN RENTAL COSTS

Low temperature range (bisque, luster, etc.)	Mid temperature range (glaze firing up to Δ6)
\$15 half load / \$30 full load	\$35 half load / \$65 full load

OVAL KILN RENTAL COSTS

Low temperature range (bisque, luster, etc.)	Mid temperature range (glaze firing up to Δ6)
\$24 half load / \$48 full load	\$52 half load / \$104 full load

FRONT-LOADING KILN RENTAL COSTS

Low temperature range (bisque Δ04)	Mid temperature range (glaze firing up to Δ6)
\$21 half load / \$42 full load	\$45 half load / \$90 full load

Non-Studio Clay and Non-Studio-Users' Clay Work

Firing of clay items from outside (e.g. from non-studio users, guests, relatives) is strictly forbidden. Studio-users who try to fire clay items created by non-studio users or from clay not purchased at LCAC are subject to disciplinary action, which may include monetary charges and/or a revoking of studio-use privileges (see "Failure To Comply")

Signing of Work

All work must be signed with the studio user's name or symbol.

- Unsigned work will not be glaze fired. It will be placed on the bottom shelf with a note indicating the issue.
- 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 Studio Coordinator & Technician is responsible for ensuring that work from classes and workshops cycles through the kilns in a timely manner (2-week turn around). The Studio Coordinator & Technician will do their best to ensure the timely firing of members' work.

Breakage

It is a generally accepted fact that pieces will occasionally be broken in a communal studio. If your work is delicate and you do not want to 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 trust can load it.
- If you accidentally break someone's work, please leave a note of apology.
- Pieces that were broken and not picked up from the kiln room after 60 days will be discarded.

Drying Work in the Kiln Room

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

- 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 while wet, it is the maker's responsibility, not the kiln loader's.

Raku Firing

Raku equipment is available for use during communal LCAC raku events. To learn more about firing raku, speak to the Studio Coordinator & Technician. Note that the Studio Coordinator & Technician cannot supervise individual raku sessions.

Final Notes on Firing

If you feel that your pieces are not being fired in a reasonable length of time or are being damaged in the kiln room, you may have to take ownership. If you know how and want to fire your own work, please book a kiln (see above and speak with the Studio Coordinator & 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 studio users' 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, or take part in the Studio Potter Program.

Clean-Up: Respect Our Community Facility

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

Main Studio Clean-Up

According to Ontario Health and Safety Laws it is illegal to sweep clay or dry glaze materials (dust that contains silica). Always use 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.”

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.
- One wipe will not completely clean-up clay. You must eliminate dust by double wiping all surfaces with clean water.
- Place the 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 the mop is clean after use.
- To avoid contamination, DO NOT put clay that has hit the floor into reclaim buckets.
- Wash bats, ware boards, and tools both front and back before putting them away. They may be put away damp, not wet.
- DO NOT ASSUME OTHERS STILL WORKING WILL BE HAPPY TO CLEAN-UP YOUR MESS – THEY WILL NOT!

Glaze Area Clean-Up

Due to the various chemicals that comprise glazes, the glaze area presents several potential hazards. If proper processes and procedures are followed, our glaze area is a safe, clean, creative place to work.

Processes

- Before waxing (use of wax is optional) and glazing, you may wish to cover surfaces with newspaper to facilitate easier and faster cleanup. If you do, discard the newspaper when you are done, do not keep and reuse it.
- Before applying glaze over wax make sure the wax has dried completely.
- If using a sponge to wipe up wax, make certain it has been well cleaned before placing the sponge back in its container. Otherwise, waxy sponges may inadvertently ruin other members' pieces.
- When finished glazing, ensure all surfaces are washed and dust free. This includes outside surfaces of glaze buckets and dollies.
- Scrape down and wipe the inside of glaze buckets to the level of the liquid glaze.
- Any tools with glaze on them should be rinsed in the glaze wash bucket before being washed in the sink to remove the majority of the 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 use glaze areas or equipment for any purpose other than glazing.
- Do not use 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:

- Potters wheels
- slab roller
- extruder
- handbuilding tables
- wedging tables (slate, plaster, granite and wood)
- a variety of studio glazes ($\Delta 6$)
- a variety of studio slips
- banding wheels
- a variety of plastic, ceramic, glass, plaster and wood molds
- assortment of bats, ware boards, rolling pins, canvas-covered work boards
- kitchen facilities – 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 can be used by authorized personnel only. Those who wish to be trained on the proper and safe use of particular areas or equipment listed below may speak to the Studio Coordinator & Technician.

- 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 the responsibility of the Studio Coordinator & Technician. Immediately notify the Technician of any issues regarding repairs. Repairs beyond the scope of knowledge or technical ability of the Studio Coordinator & Technician will be performed by an outside professional.

Movement of Clay Work

Dry Work

- Dry work, ready to be fired, can be placed on the “Bisque” shelves in the kiln room.
- Work that has special requirements must have a note with directions or be loaded by the maker. (e.g. “Please fire lying down.” or “Please fire lid separately .” etc.) otherwise work will be loaded as it is placed on the shelf

Bisque Work

- Bisque-fired work will be on the bisque pick-up shelf across from the kiln room.
- Please claim your work within two weeks of firing. The longer work sits on shelves, the more likely it is to become damaged.
- Once a month, all work will be marked with a highlighter. After 60 days, unclaimed work will become LCAC's property to be used at the discretion of LCAC.

Glazed Work

- Glaze work is to be placed on the "Glaze" shelves in the kiln room. Work that has special requirements must have a note with directions or be loaded by the maker. (e.g. "Please fire on tile" or "Please fire lid off" etc.)
- Pieces that need to be fired on a tile should be limited to new glaze combinations or testing new glazes, it is frustrating to load a kiln where every piece needs a tile under it. If every piece you put in the kiln room to get loaded needs a tile under it the kiln team may stop loading your work.
- Glazed work must be free of glaze on the bottom and high enough up the sides to account for running.
- To promote a community atmosphere, no more than 1/3 of a kiln can be of one members' work. If more space is required, either half or the entire kiln must be rented. For more information, re-read "Firing" in this manual or contact the Technician.
- Work that is glaze-fired will be placed on the finished work shelf across from the kiln room.
- Work should be picked up within two weeks. The longer the work remains on the communal shelf, the more likely it is to become damaged.
- After one month, unclaimed work will be marked. After 60 days, unclaimed work will become LCAC's property to be used at the discretion of LCAC.

Problems with Ware

- Your ware may be on a bottom shelf in the kiln room or pickup area with a note indicating an issue such as glaze on bottom of pot, not signed, glaze too thick or peeling off, pot cracked or broken. Simply correct the issue and place the work back on the appropriate shelf.
- Despite best efforts accidents happen. Please be forgiving if your work is damaged.
- Out of respect, please leave a note of apology if you damage someone else's work.

- Work with issues that is not picked up within 60 days may be discarded.

Health and Safety

Safety in the Studio

LCAC's studio is a working space where activities and practices affect other people and may be potentially dangerous. The space, its equipment, materials, and users 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 sink in the glaze area.

General Studio Safety Rules

- Dry sanding clay at any stage, (dry, bisque, glazed) is strictly prohibited at LCAC. If you must sand, use the wet sanding procedure only.
- When mixing glazes, a Respirator with P-100 cartridges (available from our ceramics suppliers or a hardware store) or a fitted N95 mask must be worn. We recommend that all studio-users who mix glazes purchase their own respirator.
- Non-latex gloves should be worn when glazing if you are:
 - sensitive to metals, or
 - have health difficulties that you do not want to exacerbate.
- Wear stable, comfortable shoes and comfortable but not overly loose clothing.
- Long hair should be tied back. Do not wear hanging jewelry or drawstrings that may get caught in machinery or in the potters' wheels.
- 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 use the wet floor signs.
- Ensure proper training on all equipment prior to use.

Areas of Safety Concern

There are a variety of hazards associated with working in a clay studio. The specific precautions and hazards can be grouped into three categories: Working With Clay, Glazes and Glazing, and Kilns and Firing.

Working With Clay

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

Hazards

- **SILICOSIS** 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 mold 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

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 used for clay.
- Use premixed clay, such as that sold at LCAC, 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 clothes frequently, or when visibly dirty and separate from other laundry.
- Avoid clay contact with broken skin. Use a skin moisturizer after using the studio, the silica content in clay and glazes will dry out your skin more quickly than it normally would and can lead to your skin cracking
- To prevent back problems, always lift with bent knees. 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 to remain intact when used with water and may be purchased at any hardware store.
 - An unglazed piece of vitrified clay or a sanding stone works well for wet sanding other clay.
 - Diamond sanding pads or discs work well for removing glaze drips
 - 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!
- To avoid dust build up, wet mop floors and work surfaces daily with clean water.

Please refer to LCAC's Silica Exposure Policy under Health & Safety in our Operational Policy Manual.

Working With Glazes and Glazing

Glazing is most often the finishing step in clay work. As glazes are comprised of materials that can be considered harmful or hazardous to health and the environment, care should be taken in using them. All studio-users should familiarize themselves with the following information about glazes and glazing.

What Is a Glaze?

Essentially, glazes (glass) used to colour or finish-coat clay pieces are a mixture of **silica**, **fluxes**, and **colourants**. Not all of the materials listed/mentioned below are ingredients in LCAC's studio glazes. However, you may encounter them on your clay journey. Please consult the glaze recipes to understand what materials and compounds are in specific LCAC glazes. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are available in the glaze kitchen for all components of our glazes.

Silica is the main glass former in glazes. It also binds to the silica in clay creating permanent adhesion between clay and glaze. Silica has a very high melting point. Common **fluxes** including lithium, calcium, and sodium are used to lower the melting point so a glaze will melt at the same temperature as the clay's vitrification point. Vitrification is when the clay transforms into a waterproof, rock-like substance. This is known as a ceramic state.

Most commonly, an assortment of metal oxides or other metal compounds are used as glaze **colourants**. These colourants dissolve into the glass as it melts and combine with other materials changing form and producing colour effects on pieces. When the glass cools, the colours are trapped in the glass. Glaze colourants are present in such small quantities that wet or fired glazes are not usually a great hazard. Nonetheless, it is advisable to keep your hands and working area as clean as possible to avoid ingestion and/or inhalation of glaze materials.

Hazards

Some metals have inherent poisonous qualities or will leach into acidic liquids such as vinegars or juices sitting in a clay vessel. Therefore, metals as glaze colourants need be handled and used properly.

- If allowed to enter the bloodstream, manganese can cause Parkinson's-disease like symptoms.
- Lustres 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 their base instead of water. Prolonged inhalation or skin contact with mineral spirits can cause short-term health hazards ranging from vomiting to rashes. A respirator with

a noxious gases cartridge in combination with using these materials in a well ventilated area can reduce risk.

- *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 anemia, chromosomal damage, birth defects and miscarriages. *Lead is strictly prohibited at LCAC.
- Certain colourant compounds of particular metals are known as probable human carcinogens, including arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, chromium (VI), nickel, and uranium.
- Antimony, cobalt, lead, lithium, manganese, and vanadium colourant 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 if a properly fitting respirator is not used .
- 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 can, 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.
- When heated to a steaming temperature, paraffin and other waxes are carcinogenic.

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 colourants that are known human carcinogens and avoid probable human carcinogens. There is no known safe level of exposure to carcinogens.

- Lustres should only be used in a well-ventilated room away from other people and while wearing a Half Face Respirator with Organic Vapour Respirator Cartridges. (Respirator can be purchased from a ceramics supplier or a hardware store.
- Use only wet cleaning practices for areas and tools that have been used for glazing.
- Wear a respirator and use the venting system when weighing and mixing powdered ingredients.
- Wet glazes are not an inhalation hazard.
- Good housekeeping procedures and wet clean-up 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,
 - or have health complications that need not be exacerbated.
- If you are not sure of the food safety of a studio glaze, please consult LCAC's Studio Coordinator & 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 wash bucket then the 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 when fired. Kiln shelves are expensive to replace and it is arduous to grind and reapply wash to them. Please be conscious of your glazing and place your work on a tile or clay cookie (bisque slab) if you are unsure of your glaze.

- When waxing, use only dedicated wax brushes and rinse thoroughly with hot water and soap.
- LCAC provides liquid, water-soluble wax in the studio. Do not use solid or melted wax. Paraffin and other waxes when heated to a steaming temperature are carcinogenic.

- Food colouring is mixed into the studio's wax to make it easier to see when it is applied on bisque ware. The colourant will burn off in the kiln.

Kilns and Firing

Electric kilns and fuel-fired kilns heat clay work to the desired firing temperature. Essentially, the kilns transform clay into a rock-like, ceramic material.

As the electric current passes through the metal coils on the walls of the kiln, it becomes increasingly hot. Electric kiln firing is always produces an oxidation firing. The temperature rises over approximately 15 hours until the kiln shuts off at the desired temperature.

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

Firing temperatures can range from as low as 1112°F for lustre, 1,382°F for raku and bisque ware, to as high as 2,372 °F for stoneware, and 2,642 °F for certain porcelains.

Hazards

There are many potential hazards when firing pottery.

- The early stages of bisque firing involve the oxidation of organic clay matter into carbon monoxide and other gases produced from combustion.
- 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 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 when inhaled.
- 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 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 (37.8 °C), 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 all kiln types must be properly vented.
- Do not use lead compounds ever.
- If purchasing or adopting pre-made glazes, ensure they are 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 (basement); 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 studio-users consistently follow the above policies and procedures at LCAC we will continue to have a safe, creative, world-class studio at London Clay Art Centre.

Please enjoy our studio safely, cautiously, and fully!

Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Contact Information at LCAC	
<p style="text-align: center;">Studio Emergencies:</p> <p>Medical, Police Emergency, Hazardous Materials Emergency, and Fire* call: 911</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ontario Poison Centre:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1-800-268-9017 (24 hr)</p>
<p>*In Case of Fire</p> <p>The fire alarm system is NOT connected directly to the fire station. We must call 911 and get everyone out of the building as quickly and calmly as possible.</p>	
Studio Support Service Numbers	
<p>For building related issues, first contact one of the following people:</p> <p>Darlene Pratt, Executive Director: 226-236-5611 (cell)</p> <p>Jenny Keller, Studio Coordinator & Technician: 519-872-4920 (cell)</p> <p>Cheryl Radford, Administrator: 519-432-4829 (home)</p>	<p>Union Gas:</p> <p>1-877-969-0999</p> <hr/> <p>Electrical:</p> <p>GNH Electric</p> <p>Glenn Holcombe: 519-933-0727 (cell)</p>
<p>Elevator:</p> <p>Delta Elevator: 1-800-265-6348</p>	<p>Emerge (Key Fobs) System:</p> <p>JPW Systems - Drew Ryan 519-494-9774 (cell) andrewr@jpwsystems.ca</p>



This manual is a working document. It will be updated with new information, policies and procedures as required.