

# KILN SAFETY



Kilns are used in art class to turn clay into beautiful ceramics. But they can also be very dangerous. Kilns operate at very high temperatures, they produce toxic fumes and can cause extensive damage if not properly maintained. We have provided some best practices to help you prevent personal injuries or property damage.

Personal protective equipment should be used while operating the kiln, including kiln mitts or gloves and approved glasses that offer ultraviolet and infrared protection. For example, you could use #3 welders green or gray glasses. Regular safety goggles or sunglasses should not be used as they may melt due to the extreme heat. Glasses will also help prevent damage to your eyes from the radiant heat.

All kilns should be installed per manufacturer's recommendations and only certified electricians should perform electrical work related to the kiln. Be sure to position the kiln in a level operating position. Extension cords should never be used to plug in a kiln. Due to potential toxic fumes, kilns should be vented outside by a professional. Never modify your kiln without first talking to the manufacturer and only use the recommended replacement parts. If your kiln is in an area with a fire sprinkler system, you will need to consult an expert to make sure that the heat caused by the kiln will not trip the sprinklers.

**You should be following all manufacturer's recommendations regarding maintenance to the kiln. Each kiln should have up-to-date records of any repair work and maintenance. Some things to check include:**

- Inspection of fire bricks
- Inspection of kiln lid and braces
- Warning signs are posted outside the kiln room
- Inspection of electrical coils
- Electrical cords are not touching the outside of the kiln
- Port holes are in good condition
- Inspection of electrical cord

If any repairs are needed, the kiln should be locked with a sign stating, "Do Not Use." All repairs should be completed by a qualified person.

Now that you have your personal protection equipment, the kiln has been installed correctly and you are conducting regular inspections, here is a list of other best practices for you.

- Do not have any combustible within two feet
- Always wash your hands before leaving the studio
- Only allow staff to load, turn on and unload art
- Don't store items on top of kiln
- Only fire the kiln when it can be supervised
- Never allow the kiln to exceed its temperature rating
- Put a fire extinguisher nearby
- Do not leave the kiln on overnight
- Never touch the heating elements with metal

Kilns are a great tool for artists but can also be dangerous. Precautions should be taken when using a kiln. If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding your kiln, please contact PACE Risk Management.