

Setting Up Your In-Home Studio With Safety In Mind

Wherever you have located your studio, be it a garage, basement or even a building near your home, there are a number of things you can, and **SHOULD** do to make your studio environment safe!

First, we need to address the issue of where to place your kiln. The kiln should be located in good sized room with sufficient air circulation and ventilation in order to remove heat and vapors that may be released during the firing process. Think about the "traffic flow" in your studio and place your kiln in a remote location that is removed from other work or high traffic areas. For example, one side of Pip's two-car garage is her glass studio. She intentionally chose the side farthest away from the entry door into the main part of the house and closest to the window in the garage.

The best and safest place for any kiln is on a cement floor, but if this is not possible, the kiln should then be placed on a **STURDY FIRE-PROOF** structure that will accommodate at least twice the weight of the kiln. The kiln should be situated in the center of this **FIRE PROOF** supportive structure and positioned AT LEAST ONE FOOT away from the nearest non-combustible wall or object(s).

The area surrounding the kiln should also be free from any combustible materials (paints, paper products, gasoline, etc.) and **IF** there are any storage shelves above the kiln, they should be completely cleared of **ANY** items! You don't want something heavy falling on your kiln!

Proper electrical service for your kiln **MUST** be available! It is UNSAFE to operate your kiln using an extension cord! Invest a few dollars and have an electrician run the service you need to a location that allows you to plug the kiln directly into the outlet. Make note of which side the electrical cord exits the kiln's controller box and make sure the wall outlet is on the **SAME** side so that the powder cord is not looped around the kiln on its way to the outlet. **NEVER** let the power cord come in contact with the kiln. Make sure the electrical outlet is on the wall ABOVE the kiln and **NOT** below it, so that **IF** any liquids are ever spilled, they will not be able to travel **DOWN** the cord and **INTO** the outlet!

You should also equip your studio with fire and smoke detectors -- you have them in your home, you should have them in your studio! A carbon monoxide detector would be necessary **ONLY** if you have a **GAS** kiln. The instructions on the detectors will advise you as to how many you may need for the size of your room and where they should be placed.

The next item on your list should be a fire extinguisher. Your kiln CANNOT spontaneously combust, however, when people carelessly leave a variety of combustible substances (i.e., rags with paint thinner) **NEAR** a hot kiln, accidents

can happen, and so aside from clearing the area around your kiln, you should also consider having a fire extinguisher located within easy reach.

Lastly, **READ YOUR KILN MANUAL!!** Yes, we know reading ANY manual is like eating sawdust while watching paint dry, but the manufacturer provides **IMPORTANT** (dare we say, “critical”) information in the manual that will ensure your wellbeing and that of your kiln, so please, **READ IT!!**

The Two Lasses recommend that you take the time to address all these important safety issues to ensure that you have many safe and happy hours in your studio!