HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE POTTER WORKSHOP

DUST HAZARDS (CLAY)

Potters are at risk due to invisible silica particles released from clay dust, which remain suspended in the air for long periods: for example silica (a constituent of clay, sandstone and other rocks) is realised after the stacking and handling of raw clay materials, handling dry pots and sculpture, from dry clay waste on floors, benches and equipment etc. The effects of this dust are accumulative and can cause a disease similar to silicosis.

DUST IS THE MAJOR RISK TO HEALTH IN A CERAMICS STUDIO. IN ORDER TO MNIMISE THE RISKS:

1. Do not eat or drink in the studio
2. Avoid making dust. It is better to prevent dust rather than try to control it.
3. Always clean up spillage as soon as it occurs. If left to dry it becomes a source of dust.
4. Clean all equipment, tools and work surfaces after use.
5. Use a wet process rather than a dry process whenever practicable.
6. Wear an overall or apron and wash it regularly.
7. If you have to handle dry materials or do dry- fettling, wear a mask.
8. Do not leave bags on the floor by the workbenches.

MIND YOUR BACK!

Clay bags and glaze buckets are heavy. Always bend your knees when picking up materials. Carry heavy objects close to the body. Ask for help if too heavy.

GLAZE SHARDS ARE AS SHARP AS GLASS!

Do not brush off glaze shards with your hands. When handling pots out of the kiln make sure that any sharp bits are handled carefully or use gloves. File sharp surfaces away.