

Fusing/Slumping Safety Notes

Keep Sharp

Most glass cuts result from not paying enough attention to what you're doing. Razor sharp edges can slice like a scalpel, and thin slivered shards will impale like a spear. It's important to always be aware of the potential for serious damage when you work with glass. Wearing open-toed shoes around sheet glass is needlessly dangerous. Complacency causes more injuries than anything else. Keep yourself sharp – always pay attention to what you're doing – and keep a handy supply of band-aides on hand.

Safety Glasses

Always wear safety glasses when cutting or grinding glass. You can buy expensive glasses, or cheap ones – any kind is better than nothing as long as you do wear them. Cheap safety glasses work fine. They just won't last as long as the more expensive brands. Whatever kind you choose, it's a smart idea to get ones that have a bottom that sits against your cheek. When you break glass or grind it, shards can fly up, hit your cheek just under your glasses, bounce off the inside of the glasses, and go straight into your eye. This happens often while grinding, when the glass bits can shoot out fast enough to imbed firmly into your eye.

Glass Dust

It's important to be especially careful to avoid inhaling glass dust. When you clean up glass dust do it with a wet sponge or cloth. If inhaled, glass dust can cause serious and permanent damage to your lungs. You can't just go to the hospital and have it removed. Once you breath glass dust in, like asbestos, it's there forever. Protect your lungs – wear a dust mask or keep the glass dust wet.

Mold or Kiln Wash Dust

Dust from kiln wash ceramic molds is a nuisance by not seriously dangerous. It should be treated the same as drywall dust. A small amount won't hurt you. If you're bothered by it, wear a dust mask. The cheap disposable kind works as well as any other.

Kilns

When firing to full temperature, a kiln get extremely hot and holding your hand against one can cause burns – but only if you hold it there. Even at their hottest temperature, you can briefly touch the kiln exterior. Kilns are very efficient at retaining heat. If you hold your hand a few inches away from a hot kiln, you will barely notice the heat.

If you open a kiln lid, do NOT look in when it's hot – unless you want to have your eyebrows efficiently burnt off. Never reach into a kiln while the elements are on.