

Wood Firing at the Canton Clay Works

The following document is an important resource and guide to participating in the wood firing services at the Canton Clay Works. Please read it thoroughly. We are making every effort to be sure that we are all on the same page in regards to how our wood firing service operates.

Welcome, we're excited to have you join us!

What is our Wood Firing Service?

The wood firing service at CCW offers the opportunity to ceramic artists (at a discounted rate) to engage in our wood firing program, where their creations are glazed, loaded, and fired in either our Noborigama or Climbing Train Kiln. **The firing service at Canton Clay Works is not a workshop.** Workshops are 2-3x more expensive, and require a greater commitment from participants. Workshop priorities are an instructional, classroom setting.

The Canton Clay Works wood firing service's top priority is to produce the best possible results we are capable of, based on 20 years of firing over 450 times. The wood firing program at the Canton Clay Works as a firing service is generally less time consuming, less expensive, and requires far less time commitment than a workshop. That being said, you get what you put into it. For example, some participants come here for four or five days to experience as much as possible, and they learn far more than if they were to simply meet the minimum requirements of 2-3 firing shifts. All participants are welcome and encouraged to invest as much time as they would like.

Our Priorities

A successful wood firing at CCW accomplishes these priorities; first, of course, is safety. It is imperative to observe all safety measures and listen to shift supervisors. We're working with high temperatures and fire, after all! The next priority is to produce the best results possible that we are capable of. We fire our wood kilns based on science, knowledge, and experience. We are aiming for results that are reliably consistent. Our third priority is education and a thorough understanding of the firing process. There is endless information to learn about wood firing, and we learn something new each time we fire! Our staff and shift supervisors will willingly train you and pass along their knowledge.

The Expectations

Participants are expected to fulfill at minimum 2-3 shifts per firing. These shifts can encompass loading and firing. More shifts are welcome and encouraged, as that is when you learn the most! Participants will be forwarded a firing schedule in order to sign up for shifts in advance. Prior to loading, participants must have delivered their wares to the studio before the end of the day the Sunday prior to loading. CCW closed Mondays, and loadings generally start on Tuesday mornings. All participants are highly

encouraged to attend the unloading. The only shifts that have a limit to the number of participants are loading shifts.

Loading and Firing Shifts

All participants purchasing half or full templates are required to do 2-3 shifts. Participants that are reserving over one template are expected to do 3-5 shifts. Shifts are typically 4-5 hours long. Participants can opt for consecutive shifts, though this can sometimes be exhausting! Participants can assist in loading the kiln as part of their shift commitment. Loading shifts are primarily the weekdays prior to firing weekend. They involve bringing pots from the studio to the kiln, wadding pots, and moving shelves/posts. Loadings are facilitated by Tim and staff.

Firing shifts are usually Friday pm into Sunday pm. This is the time frame in which the majority of shifts occur. Firing weekend begins with preheat, and finishes with kiln close-up and sometimes cool-down reduction. It takes a village, so most shifts will comprise a 2-4 person team in addition to an experienced shift supervisor. Firing shifts involve carrying wood to the kilnside, stoking the kiln, and miscellaneous duties.

There are sometimes exceptions to shift requirements. There is an option for participants who are unable to fulfill their shift duties. Wood kiln firings can require a degree of physicality. In the situation that the participants are not available to fulfill their shift requirements, they must pay an extra fee of \$100 per shift for CCW staff to fulfill their obligation. A last-minute cancellation is a difficult situation to manage, as staff is not on-call. In the case that a participant is a no-show to their shift, a \$100 penalty per missed shift will be charged. In the case that a firing ends early, we will do our best to notify you that you are not needed for your shift. This is not meant to say you are not welcome, you are always welcome; it is simply us trying to respect your time.

Registration and Payment

All registration and payments are made via our website using PayPal as our Point of Sale platform. All participants need to be pre-registered and prepaid in order for their volume to be reserved. The minimum volume is called a “half template,” which equates to 3000 cubic inches. Participants can also reserve a “full template” which equals 6000 cubic inches. Generally participants don't reserve more than 2 templates, but on occasion there is a special request. We prefer templates not to be shared, but exceptions can be made for group studio firings. No refunds, credits, or transfers are available for any cancellations. We understand that unforeseen circumstances can occur; however, please take commitments to participate seriously and with forethought. Participants are encouraged to have flexibility in their schedule.

Clay Bodies

Clays absolutely must be cone 10-11 reduction clay bodies. We highly recommend you always know your clay body; choice of clay is imperative to reach the best results and has a profound impact on the aesthetics of your final product. Different clay bodies may be recommended for the Climbing Train Kiln vs Noborigama. CCW has a document

listing the clay bodies offered here and how they fire in our kilns (See it [here](#)). To order clay for pickup at CCW, visit our website or [click here](#).

Drop-Off and Glazing

All participants are required to make an appointment with Tim or Maddisen to drop off their wares. Upon arrival, participants' volume will be measured to ensure their work fits in their space allotment. It is the participant's responsibility to fulfill their allotment.

Participants are encouraged to glaze their work at the time of drop-off. CCW supplies countless spectacular glazes and flashing slips which are included in your fees for wood firing service. New participants are encouraged to keep their glazing simple. Tim or Maddisen will make themselves available for one hour to provide instruction about glazing for the wood kilns. Participants who require additional guidance about glazing are required to pay an additional \$50/hour instruction fee. This does not mean participants must be completely done glazing within the hour or cannot ask occasional questions; this stipulation mainly applies to additional instruction.

Glazing appointments can be made by signing up for a time slot in our "Studio Sign-Up Sheet," a Google Sheets file. [Click here to open the sign up sheet](#). People in- and outside of the studio use this schedule to plan their days. Participants must abide by the time frame they sign up for. Participants are expected to show up on time for their measuring in and glazing appointment. Any participant showing up more than an hour late for their appointment must pay a \$100/hour penalty. Please understand we are working professionals, and we make ourselves available for you. In the same vein, please do not show up early for your appointment.

Unloading

All participants are encouraged to attend the unloading in order to gain greater knowledge of the firing process and results. Unloadings are the culmination of hours of work and preparation. Seeing the results is a crucial part of learning what you like or dislike. Participants who miss the unloading can make arrangements to pick their wares up at another time. It should be noted that the wood kiln area is not handicap accessible.

[Click here for photos](#) of the kilns, loading and unloading, finished pieces, and all things wood firing at the Canton Clay Works!

Thank you for your interest in our wood firing service! Please feel free to reach out if you have additional questions. Please do not be intimidated by the detail of this document; the sole intent is to communicate thoroughly and offer you as much detail as possible.

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