



Workshop Safety

The Pasadena Lapidary Society offers its members a LAPIDARY WORKSHOP. The schedule for this workshop is published in our bulletin. Participants in the lapidary workshops range from beginners to experienced members. We encourage participants to share their expertise and specialties!

Due to safety concerns, proper instruction on equipment use is mandatory for everyone who participates. Lapidary Procedures must be followed. All beginning participants must first take a two-class Lapidary Certification Course (or otherwise demonstrate proficiency), which covers lapidary techniques and equipment safety and use.

Our workshop safety rules are guidelines designed to reduce the health and safety risk when working with some of the materials of our hobby and to ensure that all newcomers are aware of these potential hazards. As with any guideline common sense and individual responsibility is expected. Remember - a clean workplace and workstation, free of clutter and scrap material is the first step to performing the task safely! If you have not worked with a particular rock or mineral material before, check with an experienced member about specific precautions to be taken while working with the material.

Protective Eye Wear:

It doesn't take much to damage the eye so seriously that it will not recover. Safety glasses are certainly a small price to pay for a lifetime of sight and **MUST** be worn when using any open saw or grinder. Small chips will often pop up and out from the blade. If you are trimming a cab design, these chips will often strike the face and possibly the eye. It is suggested to use a face shield in conjunction with safety glasses for the added protection for the face. If you use acids or caustic type cleaners it is best to combine each of the above with the use of goggles as well.

Respiratory Protection

Dust Masks: Dust masks are encouraged when working with dry or wet stone polishing to avoid prolonged exposure to water vapor containing microscopic particles of potentially hazardous materials we work with. Some of these materials are:

Actinolite - some varieties contain asbestos, one of the causes of [Mesothelioma](#)

Beryllium (Tiffany Stone) - avoid breathing dust or vapors containing beryllium compound causes [berylliosis](#)

Chrysocolla - copper based ore; all copper based ores are saturation heavy metals and can lead to a number of health related issues

Covellite - copper based ore - can cause skin and respiratory irritation.

Cuprite - copper based ore - can cause skin and respiratory irritation.

Green Petrified Woods - [chromium](#); can cause respiratory, liver and kidney damage

Malachite - copper based ore - can cause skin and respiratory irritation.

Quartz, Shell - fine dust particle from grinding or long term inhalation of water vapor containing silica and other particles - can cause silicosis

Serpentine - some forms contain chrysotile - one of the types of [asbestos](#)

Turquoise - copper based ore - can cause skin and respiratory irritation.

Glues, Adhesives, Polishing Compounds and Pastes - Keep from mucus membranes and prolonged exposure to the skin. Seek medical attention if splashed in the eyes. For some types of glues a respirator is recommended

Ventilation: Most lapidary activities, including sawing, grinding, polishing and gluing are best done safely in a well-ventilated environment.

Hand Safety:

Rough rock has a tendency to have sharp edges, especially obsidian. A thick leather palm glove is best when handling most rocks to be sawn or when removing slabs from the drying bins. When washing obsidian be exceptionally careful of points where the saw stopped and the slab fell from the host rock.

Use Dop sticks to polish your stones. Your hand can easily slip while holding a stone and receive a nasty cut or burn from the grinding wheel.

When using pickle baths or etching acids, make sure you wear appropriate rubber gloves to reduce the risk of contact with the skin. Check with a Shop Steward for assistance.

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