

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
**GREENSBORO**

*College of Arts and Sciences*  
Department of Art

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
ART EDUCATION AREA

INTRODUCTION

Most art materials approved for public school use are relatively safe for use if used as intended by the manufacturer, but all materials have some potential for misuse, or health or environmental impact. For example, all paints can contain pigments that if ingested or absorbed through the skin can cause damage to your health. These materials also must be disposed of properly so as not to create environmental problems.

See the website of the Art and Creative Materials Institute for more information: <http://www.acminet.org/>. You should be aware that ACMI is a commercial enterprise and has a vested interest in having all manufacturers subscribe to their service. It is only necessary, by law, for manufacturers of artists' materials to conform to ASTM D 4236; ACMI provides a toxicological review service for ASTM D 4236 conformance.

You should also be aware that the phrase "nontoxic," promoted by ACMI, is not a clearly defined term. For a product to be deemed "nontoxic," it must be tested. ACMI's toxicologist reviews formulas, and does random product testing on only a few materials a year. There are more than 150,000 art material products on the market – it's impossible to test them all.

PROCEDURES FOR PAINT DISPOSAL AND BRUSH WASHING

See the attached document, "Painting Clean-up Procedures." Studio sinks are for hand washing ONLY.

GENERAL DISPOSAL

You are responsible for removing unwanted furniture and trash from your studio to the nearest dumpster. Failed art projects containing paint pigments must be broken apart in placed into the fire-safe disposal can.

DO NOT leave objects in a hallway.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Use common sense and good hygienic practices in the studio.

1. Do not point brushes with your lips.
2. Do not eat or drink while painting, working with clay, glues or other art materials: you might ingest part of the art material with your snack.
3. Be sure your workspace is well ventilated. Do not spray anything in the studio. Studio space should have 10 complete room air changes per hour for adequate ventilation.
4. No household electric devices may be used in any studio. Any electric device must have a three-prong, grounded cord and a holographic UL-approved seal. Multiple outlet adaptors and extension cords are prohibited.
5. If you suspect an allergy caused by an art material, stop using it immediately and seek medical assistance from professionals who understand art material toxicology. You may be able to substitute a less irritating material.
6. Practice safe handling practices for sharp implements such as scissors or knives. For the protection of University personnel, used blades should not be discarded in the trash unless they are in a protective container.
7. For each type of art material or tool you use, read the label and understand all procedures for safe use before undertaking a class project.
8. Avoid using rubber cement, mineral spirits and any paint that requires mineral spirits for clean-up: these require additional disposal procedures and further ventilation.
9. Wash your hands using plain soap and a scrub brush. You may use a hand cleaner provided it does not contain a solvent: read the label.
10. See the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for the chemicals we use, online from a campus computer, at <http://www.uncg.edu/sft>

**For additional information, see:**

<http://www.epa.gov> and <http://www.osha.gov>