Sentry 2.0
Digital Temperature Controller
Cone-Fire / Ramp-Hold Operating Instructions

Cone-Fire (pg 10-13)
From IdLE, press 1.
Enter cone number, speed, pre-heat, hold, and slow cool.

Ramp-Hold (pg 14-18)
From IdLE, press 4.
Select stored program (1 - 4). Enter rate, temperature, and hold for each segment.

Edit Ramp-Hold (pg 7)
During firing, press 4.
Change the current segment temperature. Press Enter. Change the hold. Press Enter. The kiln will continue firing.

Delay (pg 7)
From IdLE, press 3.
Enter time in hours:minutes. Delays the start of firing.

Add Time (pg 6)
During firing, press 2.
Each additional key press adds five minutes to a hold. It works in both Ramp-Hold and Cone-Fire.

Alarm (pg 7)
From IdLE or during firing, press 7.
Enter a temperature. When alarm sounds during firing, press Enter.

Program Review (pg 7)
From IdLE or during firing, press 6.
Shows the program that is loaded in memory and ready to fire, or the one that is firing.

Alarm (pg 7)
From IdLE or during firing, press 7.
Enter temperature. When alarm sounds during firing, press Enter.

Cone Table & Skip Segment (pg 8)
From IdLE or during firing, press 9.
While firing in Ramp-Hold, skips to the next ramp. While firing in Cone-Fire, skips out of Pre-Heat or Hold.

Enter/Start
1) Press Enter/Start after each step in programming a firing.
2) Press Enter/Start once from IdLE to begin firing.

Options
From IdLE, press 0. Press Enter for option displayed.

Cone-Fire Options
Spd Speed Change the speed of a Cone-Fire program beyond the Fast, Medium, or Slow. (Pg 19)
OFST Cone Offset Adjust controller to a witness cone. (Pg 20)
FAN Vent Fan Selects when the vent fan will operate. (Special option not on all kilns.) (Page 21)

Standard Options
TCOS Thermocouple Offset Change the thermocouple temperature. (Pg 21)
CHG Select °F or °C. (Pg 22)
TC Thermocouple Type Select Type K, S or R. (Pg 22)
AOP 1 AOP 2 AOP Outlet Select vent fan or alarm if your kiln has an auxiliary output. This is a special-order feature. (Pg 22)

Firing Cost (pg 8)
Press 8 after the kiln fires to completion. The cost of the last firing will appear. (First enter electrical cost in the COST option and kiln wattage in the KW option, pg 23.)

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Cone-Fire Options
Shows factory setting. (Pg 23)
Electric Rate Enter rate shown on electric bill. (Pg 23)
The Cost to Fire Kiln Enter your kiln’s wattage. (Pg 23)
Computer ID Select identification number for output to a computer. (Pg 24)
Temperature Deviation Set temperature sensitivity for FTH, FTC & LTdE errors. (Pg 24)
Maximum temp. (P 24)
Electronics Temp. Check for overheating. (Pg 24)
Program Lock Make a program tamper-proof. (Pg 24)
Configuration Code For technicians. (Pg 25)
Software Version (Pg 25)

Multiple Zone Options
DIFF Difference Largest temperature difference between any 2 zones. (Pg 25)
Zone Temperatures Shows temperature of each zone. (Pg 25)

Stop/Back (pg 9)
Press during firing or programming.
1) Stops firing.
2) In Options, takes you back to IdLE.
3) During programming, takes you back one step each time key is pressed.

IM-204/10-09
Introduction

Thank you for purchasing the Sentry micro processor, our most advanced generation of digital temperature controllers. As you read the manual, have your controller in front of you so that you can try out the keys.

The controller display messages are limited to four characters. For this reason, the messages appear cryptic: IdLE instead of “Ready to begin,” CPLT instead of “Fired successfully to completion,” RA1 instead of “Enter rate for first segment.” If at any time you are confused by these messages, turn to Appendix A: Display Messages on pages 30 - 31.

The front cover is a quick guided tour of the controller. The back cover is a quick guide to programming, to be used after you have learned the programming instructions on pages 11 and 15.

Do not worry if you hear a clicking noise during operation. Mechanical relays click as they turn the heating elements on and off. This is normal.

The warranty on your Sentry controller does not cover damage from overfiring, regardless of the circumstances. It is the operator’s responsibility to make sure the kiln turns off at the end of the firing.

The Sentry operates in Cone-Fire and Ramp-Hold similar to the earlier DTC 600, 800, and 1000 series. If you are familiar with the earlier controllers, you can follow many of the same operating procedures with the Sentry.

If you purchased the TnF 2 portable controller, you should find a TnF 2 installation instruction sheet in addition to these instructions.

Instructions for multiple-zone kilns are included in this manual. If you are not sure whether your kiln is multiple-zone, look into the firing chamber. If you see two or three thermocouple tips, your kiln is multiple-zone. If you see only one thermocouple, skip multiple-zone instructions.

New features introduced with Sentry software version 18D: The Rate option (page 23), Ramp-Hold rate shown in Present Status (page 7), firing cost calculation (page 8), TCL alarm (page 27), PF1 alarm (page 27), and 2 segments added to the User 1 program for a total of 20 (page 14). To check the software version of your Sentry, press the OPTIONS key repeatedly until SOFT appears. Press ENTER. Your controller’s software version will appear. 18D and later versions include the new features.

Once you learn the basic features of the Sentry, you will be able to control every stage of firing. This offers learning opportunities and convenience difficult to imagine with a manual controlled kiln.

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Safety

The warranty on your Sentry controller does not cover damage from overfiring, regardless of the circumstances. It is the operator’s responsibility to make sure the kiln turns off at the end of the firing.

Follow these safety rules in addition to the ones in your kiln or furnace manual:

- When the kiln is not in use, disconnect the power and keep the lid or door closed. (For larger kilns with heavy cordsets, we recommend a power disconnect box near the kiln.)
- Do not leave the kiln unattended, especially near the expected shut-off time. Do not leave a kiln turned on at your studio while you are at home sleeping.
- Wear firing safety glasses when looking into the peephole of a hot kiln.
- Do not touch hot sides of kiln or furnace. Keep unsupervised children away.
- Install your kiln or furnace at least 12 inches from any wall or combustible surface. (See manufacturer’s recommendation for your model.)
- Do not open lid or door until kiln or furnace has cooled and all switches are off.
- Fire only in a well-ventilated, covered and protected area away from flammable materials. Keep cordset away from hot sides of kiln or furnace.
- DANGEROUS VOLTAGE! Do not touch heating elements with anything. Disconnect kiln or furnace before servicing.
- Do not operate if the controller itself is hotter than 158°F / 70°C. (See instructions on page 24 for checking circuit board temperature.) Never allow the firing room temperature to exceed 110°F / 43°C. (Measure room temperature three feet from the kiln.)
- Stop a firing by pressing the STOP button, not by disconnecting the power. In certain conditions, the controller will interpret a power interruption as a power failure and turn the kiln back on when you reconnect the power.
- Place the kiln on the stand recommended by the manufacturer. When a kiln is safety tested by UL, the lab fires the kiln on the stand designed for the kiln. Cinder blocks or bricks can inhibit the flow of air under the kiln. They can also change the kiln’s heating characteristics.
- Place the kiln on a non-combustible surface.
- Keep the kiln lid or door closed when the kiln is not in use. This keeps dust out of the kiln. Also, should someone turn on the kiln while you are away, the closed lid will keep the heat safely inside the firing chamber.
- Never place anything on the kiln lid, even when the kiln is idle. If people become accustomed to placing papers and other objects on the kiln, they may forget and do that while the kiln is firing.
- Remove all tripping hazards from around the kiln. Keep the kiln’s supply cord out of traffic areas.
- Avoid extension cords.
- Never fire tempered glass inside a kiln. It could explode.
- Greenware, which is unfired clay, must be bone dry before firing. Moist greenware can explode inside the kiln, damaging the ware and the kiln. Place a piece of greenware against the inside of your wrist. If it feels cool, it is too wet to fire.
- Store kiln shelves in a dry area. Moist shelves can explode inside a kiln.
- If you smell burning plastic, turn the kiln off. Examine the wall outlet and supply cord for signs of burning.
- Never place extra insulation around the kiln in an attempt to conserve energy. The extra insulation can cause the wiring and the steel case to overheat.
Chapter 1
Basic Pointers

Two Firing Modes
The Sentry fires in two modes:

- **Cone-Fire**, based on pyrometric cones (page 10). Quickly program a firing by selecting a cone number and firing speed.
- **Ramp-Hold** with custom firing rates and target temperatures is for ceramists who want to design their own firing schedules (page 14).

Ceramic kilns use both Cone-Fire and Ramp-Hold. Heat treating, glass fusing, and enameling furnaces and kilns come with Ramp-Hold only.

1. From **IdLE** display, press 1. If **CONE** appears, you have Cone-Fire mode. If the 1 key does not respond, you have Ramp-Hold mode only.
2. Press **STOP** to bring the controller back to **IdLE**. If you have Ramp-Hold only, skip pages 10 - 13.

Room Temperature and Humidity
It is okay to store the Sentry at sub-zero temperatures. But before operating, raise the room temperature to at least 32°F / 0°C.

**Note:** The Sentry will register sub-zero °F / °C temperatures. However, 32°F / 0°C is the lowest recommended operating temperature.

The circuit board is rated for 176°F / 80°C maximum operating temperature. However, the maximum recommended temperature is 158°F / 70°C, measured at the controller inside the kiln switch box. To lower the temperature, open windows and use a fan to blow air across the kiln’s switch box louvers. (See page 24 to check circuit board temperature.)

High humidity will not adversely affect the Sentry unless water condenses on the circuit board. In this case, do not fire the kiln until the moisture has evaporated from the board.

Thunder Storms and Power Surges
Unplug the kiln when not in use, especially during thunder storms and in areas with frequent power surges. If the kiln is part way through a firing when a storm begins, it may be okay to continue the firing. When the kiln shuts off, disconnect the power.

**CAUTION:** When firing the kiln during a storm, do not leave the kiln unattended!

Time and Temperature Display

**Center Dot: Time**
A center dot appears during time display. It separates hours from minutes (i.e. 1 hour, 30 minutes displays as 01.30). During temperature display, the dot disappears.

**Three-Light Display**
The Sentry turns on the heating elements intermittently through relays. Power output lights appear in the right side of the display when the Sentry sends a signal to turn on the relays.

- **Single-Zone Kiln** When the Sentry sends a signal to the relays, all three lights appear.
- **Multiple-Zone Kiln** The top light indicates power to the top section of the kiln, the middle light power to the middle section, and the bottom light power to the bottom section. (Two-zone kilns: Ignore the center light.)

**Note:** Though power output lights are on, mechanical problems can prevent the relays from turning on.

**Single Right-Hand Dot: °C**
When temperature is displayed in °C, a dot appears in the lower right. In °F display, it disappears. You can choose between Fahrenheit and Celsius display. See page 22.

Operation Begins from the IdLE Display
The controller displays **IdLE** when you first apply power to the kiln. Operation begins from **IdLE**. You can’t fire the kiln until **IdLE** appears.

- If you press **STOP** during a firing, **AbRT** will appear. To get back to **IdLE**, press **ENTER**.
- If the display shows an error message such as **FAIL** instead of **IdLE**, see pages 26 - 28.
- **CPLT** (firing completed) appears at the end of a firing. To make **IdLE** appear, press any key.
- If you do not touch the keys for one minute during programming, the controller will go back to **IdLE**. The controller will also discard the program you were entering and retain the previous program in memory.

CPLT Message: Firing Completed
When the firing has successfully completed, the Sentry will shut off power to the elements. Then four messages will cycle one after the other:

1. **CPLT** (complete)
2. Firing time in hours and minutes
3. The temperature reached during the last segment
4. The current kiln temperature
Note: After the kiln fires to completion, disconnect the power. It is okay to turn off the power to the controller while the kiln cools to room temperature.

Note: Pre-18D software version controllers: (See page 25 to find version) If CPLT appears immediately after you press START, it is because all programmed temperatures are lower than the current kiln temperature. If the alarm sounds (see page 12), and then the kiln fires to completion, you will see ALAR instead of CPLT. Press ENTER; CPLT will appear.

Repeat Firings
To repeat the last firing, press ENTER from IDLE. The kiln will begin firing. This works in both Cone-Fire and Ramp-Hold. But first, make sure you are repeating the correct firing by using Program Review (see page 7). For repeat firings that you don’t want to inadvertently change, see Program Lock, page 24.

Thermocouple Inspection
The small rod protruding into the firing chamber is the temperature sensor, or thermocouple.

CAUTION: Bumping the thermocouple can push it out of the firing chamber. This could cause an overfire! The controller does not contain an alarm to detect this type of failure. Bumping the thermocouple could also cause inaccurate readings.

Thermocouples come in different widths. The wider the thermocouple, the farther it should extend into the firing chamber. A ½” - ¼” diameter thermocouple should extend into the firing chamber about 1”. A 1/8” thermocouple should extend into the chamber ½” - 5/8”. (Do not be concerned if your thermocouple extends into the firing chamber even farther.)

Keep shelves, posts and ware 1” - 1½” away from the thermocouple. Keep an extra thermocouple on hand, especially if you fire hotter than 2000°F / 1093°C.

If you are using a portable, separate controller, you will need to install the thermocouple onto the kiln. See the separate TnF 2 installation instructions.

Preventing an Overfire
Even though a digital controller turns off the kiln automatically, you should monitor the kiln during firing. This is to prevent a possible overfire.

1 Remain nearby while the kiln is firing. Check the kiln occasionally.
2 Set the temperature alarm (page 7) to remind yourself to check the kiln. If you are too far away to hear the alarm, you might try using a baby monitor.
3 After the kiln fires to completion, disconnect the power. It is okay to turn off the power to the controller while the kiln cools to room temperature.

Chapter 2
The Keys

Correcting Entries
If you enter the wrong temperature, cone, time, etc., while programming, enter 0000. Then enter the correct numbers before pressing ENTER. See also the Stop/Back Key, page 9.

Canceling a New Program
If you do not touch the keys for one minute during programming, the controller will go back to the IDLE display. The controller will also discard the program you were entering and will retain the previous program in memory.

This is useful if you change your mind during programming and decide to keep the previous program. Instead of completing the new program, wait a minute and let the controller return to IDLE.

1 / Cone-Fire
Cone-Fire is a method of firing ceramics to a pyrometric cone. See Chapter 3, page 10, for details. To find out if your Sentry includes Cone-Fire:

1 From IDLE display, press 1. If CONE appears, you have Cone-Fire mode. If the 1 key does not respond, you have Ramp-Hold mode only.

2 Press STOP to bring the controller back to IDLE.

2 / Add Time
This key adds five minutes to a Hold. It is designed for ceramists who watch witness cones and for glass artists who inspect the glass near the end of firing.

1 During a firing, press 2 HOLD, and time in hold, will appear.
2 Press 2 again. The time shown will increase by 5 minutes.
3 To return to the temperature display, press START or wait 1 minute.

Note: Add Time will add 5 minutes to hold even if no hold had been programmed. After hold time displays, 5 minutes are added with each press of the key.

With the Add Time (2) button, you can add time to a hold. With the editing feature (4), you can change both target temperature and hold.
3 / Delay Fire
This delays the start of the firing by the amount of time entered. Use it to fit a firing into your schedule or to take advantage of lower electric rates at night. Delay zeroes out after each firing. Therefore, it must be programmed again for each firing. The maximum delay is 99 hours and 59 minutes.

1 First, enter the Cone-Fire or Ramp-Hold program you are going to fire.

2 From Idle press 3. Enter delay time (i.e., 5½ hours = 05.30). Press ENTER.

3 To begin Delay, press ENTER once from Idle. A Delay count-down timer will appear.

Note: Press START during delay to end the delay and begin the firing. (You could also press STOP to end the delay and then START to begin the firing.)

CAUTION: For safety, do not leave the kiln alone during a delay or a firing. We cannot guarantee your kiln against overfiring even though the controller is automatic. The operator assumes full responsibility for shutting the kiln off at the proper time.

4 / Ramp-Hold / Edit
Ramp-Hold fires the kiln to the temperature you specify, whereas Cone-Fire fires to a pyrometric cone. Press 4 from Idle to program a firing or to select a stored program. See “Ramp-Hold,” page 14.

Editing the Current Segment During Ramp-Hold Firing

Note: This feature works only in Ramp-Hold, not in Cone-Fire.

While the kiln is firing in Ramp-Hold, you can change the target temperature and hold time of the current segment. (You can edit only the segment that is firing. To edit other segments, wait until the firing has progressed to those segments.)

Even if the current segment has already started its hold time, you can still edit the segment’s target temperature. You can raise or lower the target temperature. The controller will go back out of hold and fire to the new target temperature at the original rate. (You cannot edit the rate, however.)

1 During firing, press 4.

2 The display will show the target temperature of the current segment. Use the number keys to change the temperature. Then press ENTER.

3 The display will then show the hold time of the current segment (or 00.00 if there is no hold time). Change the time, if needed, and press ENTER. The kiln will resume firing.

5 / Present Status
Press 5 during a firing to display the current segment that is firing. (See page 14 for the definition of segments, rate, and hold.) The messages that can appear in Present Status:

- **Ra**, the segment number, and rate: The Sentry is in the ramp part of a segment.
- **Hd** and segment number: The Sentry is in the hold part of a segment.
- **Prht** Cone-Fire Pre-Heat (see page 12).
- **Cool** Cone-Fire Slow Cooling (see page 12).

Uses for Present Status:

- You are firing a program that contains several heating and cooling segments. Without Present Status, it would be easy to lose track of which segment is firing.

Note: Present Status shows the actual firing rate of the current segment instead of only the rate you programmed.
7 / Temperature Alarm

The alarm sounds and ALAR flashes when the kiln reaches the alarm temperature that you enter. Use the alarm to alert you to—

- Lower the lid from venting position.
- Check the witness cone near shut-off time.
- Check the fusing or slumping of glass.

You can enter only one alarm temperature at a time. However, after the alarm beeps, you can set the alarm for another temperature, as many times as you want, during the firing. Entering an alarm temperature automatically erases the previous alarm temperature.

Note: The alarm temperature that you set during a firing must be higher than the current display temperature. The alarm is designed only for higher temperatures and not for cooling temperatures.

After the alarm beeps, the alarm temperature will stay in memory for future firings until you replace it with a new temperature.

Monitoring the Alarm from a Distance

Place an inexpensive baby monitor near the kiln. From another location in your building, you will be able to hear the temperature alarm beeping and the relays clicking.

Setting the Alarm From Idle

1. From Idle, press 7. ALAR will appear alternating with the last alarm temperature entered.

2. Enter alarm temperature. Press ENTER. Idle will appear. (If you do not want to use the alarm, set the alarm temperature to 0. This setting will disable the alarm.)

Note: Your controller’s maximum temperature is shown in the SFTY option (page 24). If you enter an alarm temperature that is higher than the maximum temperature, the alarm temperature will automatically change to the controller’s maximum temperature.

When the alarm sounds, shut it off by pressing any key except STOP. (Pressing STOP while an alarm sounds will shut off the kiln.)

Note: If the alarm sounds as soon as firing begins, it is because the alarm was set to a temperature below the current temperature.

Setting the Alarm During Firing

1. The alarm beeps while the kiln is firing. Press 7.

2. Enter the new temperature.

3. Press ENTER. The kiln will continue firing.

If you touch 7, enter a new temperature, and forget to press ENTER, the controller will merely continue firing without resetting the alarm.

8 / Estimating the Firing Cost

Note: This feature is included with software version 18D and newer controllers. To look up your software version, see page 25.

The Sentry controller can figure the electrical cost of a firing. Set up the controller as follows:

In the COST option, enter the cost of a kilowatt-hour of electricity. See page 23.

In the KW option, enter the wattage for your kiln. See page 23.

After the kiln fires to completion, CPL will flash. Press the 8 key. The cost of electricity to fire the last load will appear. To return to temperature display, press ENTER.

Note: If you enter the kiln wattage in the KW option but do not enter cost per kilowatt-hour in the COST option, the controller will display kilowatt-hours instead of firing cost.

9 / Cone Numbers & Skip Segment

Cone Table

Look up a cone temperature with the 9 key. (See page 10 for information on cones.)

1. From Idle, press 9. CONE will appear, then the cone, if any, currently programmed in Cone-Fire.

2. Enter a pyrometric cone number. Press ENTER. The display will show the cone temperature. If you enter a non-existent cone number, the display will show CONE, ready for you to enter a different cone number.
Note: Do not be concerned if the actual cone shut-off temperature does not match the Cone Table. The temperature of a cone varies with firing speed. The cone temperatures in Cone Table are for self-supporting cones fired at a rate of 108°F/60°C per hour during the last hour of firing.

Skip Segment
Skip Segment works only during firing. It jumps from the current segment to the next one.

To skip a segment, press 9. **SKIP** will appear, then the current segment. Press **ENTER**. (If you change your mind and don’t want to skip that segment, don’t press **ENTER** after **SKIP** appears. Instead, press 9 again. The firing will continue in the same segment.)

Skip Segment in Cone-Fire
In Cone-Fire, Skip Segment works in Pre-Heat and Hold:
- To skip out of Pre-Heat and begin the cone firing.
- To skip out of Cone-Fire Hold. Slow Cooling will begin. (If the firing does not include Slow Cooling, Skip Segment will not end a Hold. Press **STOP** to end the firing.)
- If you press 9 during a cone firing when the kiln is not in Pre-Heat or Hold, the cone number and cone temperature will appear in the display.

Skip Segment in Ramp-Hold
In Ramp-Hold, the firing will skip to the ramp of the next segment from either a ramp or hold of the current segment. (See page 14 for details on ramps, holds, and segments.)

If you make a mistake during programming, you can press the **STOP / BACK** key to go back one step.

Note: Skip Segment does not skip from a ramp to a hold. It skips to the next segment.

Skip Segment Examples
For additional examples, see pages 17 - 18.

Cone-Fire
- In Cone-Fire you are firing to an 05 witness cone for the first time. You select cone 04 with a 60 minute hold and a slow cooling. After 30 minutes in hold, the 05 witness cone bends to maturity. Use Skip Segment to end the hold and begin Slow Cooling.

  **Note:** Once you know how much hold time will bend the witness cone, program that much hold for the next firing.

Ramp-Hold
- **Skipping to a Cooling Segment:** You have programmed 2167°F for a cone 5 glaze firing, followed by a segment for controlled cooling. Watching the witness cone through the peephole, you notice that cone 5 is bending at 2150°F. Use Skip Segment to end the firing segment and begin the one for slow cooling.

  **Note:** Make a note of the temperature at which the cone bent. Program that temperature for the next firing.

Enter/Start
- Press **ENTER** after each step in programming a firing.
- From **IDLE** press **ENTER** once to begin firing.

The Stop/Back Key
You can stop a firing at any time by pressing **STOP**. If you inadvertently enter Ramp-Hold or Options, you do not have to go through all the prompts to get back out. Press **STOP** to go to **IDLE**.

The **STOP/BACK** key is also like the Back button on an Internet browser. It works in Cone-Fire and Ramp-Hold programming. It will take you back one step with each key press. It is easy to make programming corrections.
Cone-Fire mode is based on pyrometric cones. It is not designed for heat treating, glass fusing and enameling. For these firings, see “Ramp-Hold,” page 14. Use Ramp-Hold to fire ceramic pieces that require a custom firing schedule, such as some types of stoneware sculpture or crystalline glaze.

Before using Cone-Fire, read all of this chapter. Have your controller in front of you so that you can try out the keys as you read. For more information on pyrometric cones and venting, please see your kiln’s instruction manual.

Pyrometric Witness Cones

The Sentry shuts off automatically without cones. Nevertheless, every ceramic firing should include at least one witness cone (also called the shelf cone). The witness cone is the most accurate measurement of heat work in a ceramic firing.

If you fire the same size load and type of ware regularly, the witness cones let you compare one firing to the next and alert you when something is wrong. For example, if the witness cone bends less and less with each consecutive firing, this may indicate thermocouple temperature drift.

Note: If the bending of the witness cone does not match the Cone-Fire shut-off, you may want to adjust Cone Offset or Thermocouple Offset. See pages 20 - 21. If the witness cones bend inconsistently from one firing to another, see “Sentry Troubleshooter,” a separate publication.

How to Position Cones on the Shelf

Position the witness cones so that you can see them through a peephole during firing. If the kiln takes longer than usual to fire, you may wonder if something has gone wrong and the kiln is over-firing. But by seeing the cones, you will know how the firing is actually progressing.

If you follow these guidelines, you should be able to see the cones even at cone 10:

1. Place the cones 8” - 12” away from a peephole. Positioning them closer makes them difficult to see.
2. Have enough space around the cones to keep them from touching a piece of ware when they bend.
3. Position cones so that when viewed from the peephole, they are silhouetted by an element on the opposite kiln wall. (Keep cones at least 2” from an element.)
4. The element that silhouettes the cones should be level with the lower part of the cone. If the element is in line with the upper part of the cone, you won’t be able to see the cone when it bends.
5. If you use the three cone system, always have the higher temperature cone on the same side in every firing. Otherwise you can lose track of which cone is which.
6. Wear kiln firing safety glasses when viewing the cones through the peephole.

See your dealer if in doubt about which cone number to use with each clay and glaze.

Firing Schedules

Cone-Fire uses three firing schedules:
- Low fire cones 022 - 011
- Medium fire cones 010 - 01
- High fire cones 1 - 10

The firing schedules programmed into Cone-Fire are listed in Appendix B, pages 32 - 33. Should you ever want to customize a Cone-Fire program, transfer the firing schedule to Ramp-Hold (page 14). Then make the desired changes to the firing schedule.

During a cone firing, press 5 (Present Status) to see which stage, or segment, of the firing the kiln has reached. The number displayed will be a segment number from one of these firing schedules.

Note: Pre-Heat shows in Present Status as PRHT. It is not given a separate segment number.
Firing time in each segment is approximate and depends on the age of elements, voltage, size of load, and the firing speed you have chosen.

**CAUTION:** Cone numbers beginning with 0 are lower in temperature than those without the 0. When programing a Cone-Fire, be sure you know the difference between an 05 and 5. See “Temperature Equivalents Chart for Orton Self-Supporting Pyrometric Cones,” Appendix D, page 36.

**Low Fire Cones 022 - 011**

This range includes decals, over-decorations, lusters, and golds. The firing can be fast. Good venting is important, because oils and other organics burn off. Do not close the lid from the vented position until all odor has disappeared.

**Low Fire Cones 022 - 011 Standard Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate Per Hour</th>
<th>Time in Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>396°F/220°C</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>108°F/60°C</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firing time is 3 to 5 hours, depending on the cone and speed.

**Middle Fire Cones 010 - 01**

Use this range for earthenware and commercial low-fire glazes. Glazes fired on bisque ware (ware that has already been fired) can be fired faster than the unfired greenware. In this cone range, slow firings can produce poor quality glazes.

In the Cone-Fire schedule, the firing is slowed during the silica phase change (1063°F/573°C).

Earthenware and clays that contain ball clays, talc, and kaolin will burn off water, carbon, and sulfur. This reduces weight by 10%.

Cooling too fast can produce glaze pinholes, blisters, and craters.

We recommend a 10 - 20 minute hold when firing lead-free glazes.

**Middle Fire Cones 010 - 01 Standard Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate Per Hour</th>
<th>Time in Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>324°F/180°C</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>153°F/85°C</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>180°F/100°C</td>
<td>2 hours, 40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>108°F/60°C</td>
<td>1 hour, 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firing time is 6 to 8 hours, depending on the cone and speed.

---

**Cone-Fire Programming**

Use these instructions for your first firings. Later you may prefer “Cone-Fire Shorthand Programming,” page 40.

As the Sentry prompts for cone, speed, pre-heat, hold, and slow cooling, values entered for the last firing will appear. To use these values again, press **ENTER**.

**To fire without Delay or Alarm:** Follow steps 1 through 7 below. Then from **Idle** press **START**. To use Delay or Alarm, see also pages 7 - 8.

1. Apply power to the kiln. **8888** then **Idle** will appear. (Press **ENTER** if **Idle** does not appear.)

2. Press 1. **Cone** will appear. Enter cone number. (If the 1 key does not respond, your controller has Ramp-Hold only.)

3. Press **ENTER**. **Spd** will appear. Enter speed: FAST (1), MEDIUM (2), SLOW (3). (Medium speed will display as **Std**.)

4. Press **ENTER**. **Prht** will appear. To use Pre-Heat (p. 12), enter time. Otherwise enter 0.

5. Press **ENTER**. **Hold** will appear (pg 13). To soak the ware at the end of firing, enter a hold time. Otherwise enter 0.

6. Press **ENTER**. **Cool** will appear (pg 13). To use Slow Cooling, enter cooling rate as degrees per hour. (180°F/82°C is the maximum cooling rate. Press 0 to turn Slow Cooling off.)

7. Press **ENTER**. **Idle** will appear.

8. **To set Alarm:** Press 7. **Alar** will appear. Enter alarm temperature. (Press 0 to turn alarm off.) Then press **ENTER**.

9. **To set Delay:** Press 3. **Del** will appear. Enter delay time. Press **ENTER**. (Delay zeroes out after each firing.)

10. **To start program,** press **ENTER** once. **Strt** will appear, then temperature. If Delay was programmed, **Del** will appear, then time remaining until start. To stop the program during firing, press **STOP**.

When program fires to completion, **Cplt** will appear. Press **ENTER**. **Idle** will appear. To shut off the alarm when it sounds during a firing, press **ENTER**.
High Fire Cones 1 -10

This is the firing range for porcelain and stoneware. These bodies fire nearly to vitrification and can shrink up to 16%. Water, carbon and sulfur burn out during the early stages and must be vented. The amount of oxygen in the kiln affects the color of the fired clay. The high fire schedule below slows down during the last 210°F/100°C to produce better density in the ware.

Typical porcelain clays are formulated from kaolin, feldspars, silica and ball clays. Weight loss is 10 - 12% and shrinkage is as high as 20%. If over-fired, porcelain may warp or blister. The Cone-fire Hold option usually enhances porcelain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate Per Hour</th>
<th>Time in Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>324°F/180°C</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>153°F/85°C</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>162°F/90°C</td>
<td>4 hours, 35 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>108°F/60°C</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firing time is 9 hours, 30 minutes to 11 hours, depending on the cone and speed.

Cone-Fire Features

Speed (SPd)

The Cone-Fire schedules shown on pages 11 - 12 are standard. When you select Medium speed in a Cone-Fire program, the kiln uses these standard firing schedules. When you select Fast (1), the standard schedule fires 20% faster. On Slow (3), it fires 20% slower.

You can also alter the firing speed even more under Speed (SPd) in Options. You can increase or decrease the firing time of a standard schedule by up to 40%. For instance, if you are on a tight deadline, you can reduce a 7 hour fast cone firing to 5 ½ hours.

Pre-Heat (PRHT)

Moist greenware can explode during firing. This happens when the moisture in the clay turns to steam rapidly and cannot escape fast enough. The Sentry Pre-Heat feature dries the ware at low temperature before the moisture can turn to steam.

Pre-Heat is sometimes necessary when firing thick greenware, such as stoneware. It may also be necessary in humid weather, which inhibits drying. If possible, however, avoid using Pre-Heat to dry greenware. If the greenware feels damp or cool when you touch it to your cheek, dry it longer before firing. Use a dehumidifier in humid weather. Drying greenware in the kiln tends to rust the kiln.

**Note:** During Pre-Heat, vent the lid or use the optional Orton Vent Master. Otherwise the firebricks will absorb moisture, leading to rust behind the steel case. Moisture in the firebricks can also slow the firing to a crawl.

**CAUTION:** Venting the lid during Pre-Heat is so important that some ceramists use the extended vent position or even leave the lid open. If you do this, you must be near your kiln at the end of Pre-Heat to lower the lid.

Pre-Heat raises the temperature 60°F/33°C per hour to 200°F/93°C. Then it holds at 200°F/93°C for the time you specify. Pre-Heat works in Cone-Fire only. After Pre-Heat is finished, the kiln will automatically begin firing to the cone you have selected.

**Note:** Above an altitude of 6,000 feet, water boils at a lower temperature. This may cause moisture in the ware to turn to steam even during Pre-Heat.

Mirror Test

This test will help you determine how much Pre-Heat to use.

Occasionally during Pre-Heat, hold a mirror near the top peephole. (Be careful to avoid burns.) The mirror must be at room temperature, not hot, so hold it near the peephole for only several seconds.

If the mirror fogs, moisture is still escaping from the ware. When the mirror no longer fogs, you can exit Pre-Heat and begin the firing.

To interrupt Pre-Heat and begin firing to the cone in Cone-Fire, press (Skip Segment). will appear. Press ENTER. Segment 1 of the firing will now begin. (See Cone-Fire firing schedules, pages 11 - 12.)

**Note:** If you are using a vent fan, such as the Orton Vent Master, leave the fan on during Pre-Heat. The fan will help to remove moisture. (AOP Fan users: see the Fan option, page 21.)

**How to Use Pre-Heat When Kiln is Above 200°F/93°C at Beginning of Firing**

If you begin firing with Pre-Heat in a kiln that is already hotter than Pre-Heat temperature, the kiln will skip Pre-Heat and begin firing to the cone. There are two ways to use Pre-Heat in this situation:

- Wait until the kiln cools below 200°F before starting the firing. This is the preferred method.
- Load the kiln and start the firing, but include enough time in Delay for the kiln to cool below 200°F before Pre-Heat begins.
Hold (HOLd)

Cone-Fire Hold heat-soaks the ware at the cone temperature at the end of the firing. Without Hold, the kiln shuts off after it reaches the cone temperature. Hold maintains the cone temperature for the period you specify. Hold helps even out the temperature throughout the kiln. It also helps the heat to penetrate completely into the clay. (Rapid firing is like cooking: the turkey will be done on the outside but not on the inside.) Hold helps glaze absorb china paint. It may heal glaze defects such as bubbles. A little hold time can yield dramatic results.

**CAUTION:** Too much hold time can overfire your ware and burn out colors.

One way to add Hold time without over-firing is to fire to one cone cooler than needed. Then add enough hold time to bend the next hotter cone. Hold time needed to bend the next cone will vary. As a rule of thumb, 45 - 60 minutes of hold = one cone of heat work.

Example: to fire to cone 05, program Cone-Fire for 06 and add 45-60 minutes of hold time.

Watch the pyrometric witness cones through the peephole. Press **STOP** when the correct witness cone bends, noting how much Hold time was needed. Program that much Hold time the next time you fire the same type of ware loaded to the same capacity.

**Note:** During Hold, the display temperature will alternate with time left in Hold. To figure hold time for the next firing, subtract time left in Hold from the total Hold time entered.

When Hold is set to 99.99 hours, the Sentry will remain at that temperature indefinitely, until you press **STOP**.

Slow Cooling (COOL)

Slow cooling enhances the quality of some ceramic glazes and may heal glaze bubbles. Slow cooling encourages crystal development, deeper gloss, and sometimes startling color shifts. Iron red glazes seem to respond well to slow cooling. For these reasons we have added a Slow Cooling feature to Cone-Fire.

- Slow Cooling begins after the cone firing (and Hold, if any) and ends at 392°F/200°C.
- When **COOL** appears in Cone-Fire programming, enter a cooling rate between 1°F/C to 180°F / 82°C per hour. A good starting point is a rate of 90°F / 50°C per hour.
- Enter a rate of 0 to turn Slow Cooling off.

**Note:** Slow Cooling can extend the firing time by many hours. For instance, if the cone shutoff temperature is 1945°F / 1063°C, and the cooling rate is 100°F / 55°C, the kiln will take 15 ½ hours to reach 392°F / 200°C.

When the Kiln Shuts Off Too Soon

If the kiln shuts off before the pyrometric witness cone bends, you can turn the kiln back on and keep firing. Simply program the next hotter cone in Cone-Fire. Then from **Idle**, press **START**. The kiln will begin firing, taking up where it left off.

**Note:** Look at the witness cones through a peephole to know if the kiln shuts off too soon.

If the kiln shuts off within 100°F/55°C of maturity, and the temperature drops 50°F/28°C or more after the kiln shuts off, do not depend on the witness cones. Once they cool 50°F/28°C after they have been heated to within 100°F/55°C of maturity, they will not bend properly. This is because they form a hard shell.

Wrong Thermocouple Type

If a Type-K thermocouple is installed on your kiln, but your controller is set for Type-S, the kiln will continually underfire by a wide margin. See page 22 to check the thermocouple type.

For Kilns with AOP Outlet

The AOP (auxiliary output) is a special-order receptacle mounted in the kiln switch box. The Sentry controls power to the AOP receptacle. The AOP is usually used to power a kiln vent.

The Fan option, which is accessed through the **OPTIONS** key, determines when an AOP-powered kiln vent will operate during Cone-Fire.

Before the Fan option will appear on the Options list, (1) you must enter a Cone-Fire program in active memory and (2) you must select VFAN in the AOP1 or AOP2 option. (See page 22 for instructions on selecting VFAN.)

1. From **Idle**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **FAN** appears.
2. Press **ENTER**. Use the **1** and **2** keys to select one of these settings:
   - **ON**: The vent is on during Pre-Heat, the cone firing, and Slow Cooling. It turns off at 212°F/100°C.
   - **OPT**: The vent is on during Pre-Heat and the cone firing. It is off during Slow Cooling.
   - **OFF**: The vent is off all the time.
3. After selecting one of the above, press **ENTER**. Press **STOP** to return to **Idle**.
Chapter 4
Ramp-Hold

Before using Ramp-Hold, read all of this chapter. Have your controller in front of you so that you can try out the keys as you read.

Theory of Ramp-Hold Operation
The temperature you are firing to in Ramp-Hold is called the target temperature. After the Sentry reaches the target temperature, it can also hold that temperature.

The Sentry fires at a controlled heating rate. The rate is figured in degrees per hour. If you selected a rate of 100° per hour, it would take 10 hours for the kiln to reach 1000°. Rate is similar to miles per hour.

In summary, Ramp-Hold mode does three basic tasks:
1) It fires at a controlled heating rate, or speed, measured in degrees of temperature change per hour.
2) It fires to a target temperature.
3) It can hold the target temperature.

The Sentry fires in segments, or stages. A segment is a controlled heating rate to a target temperature. A segment can also have a hold. Shown in the chart below is a segment with a target temperature of 1250°, a rate of 625°, and a hold of one hour.

The two parts of a segment:
- **Ramp:** The temperature changes.
- **Hold:** The temperature remains the same.

A segment can have only one ramp and only one hold. Therefore, if you need more than one hold, you will have to add additional segments to the firing. Firing to a temperature at a single rate would need only one segment. Reasons to add more segments:
- To change the heating rate
- To add a hold somewhere below the shut-off temperature
- To control the cooling rate.

The diagram below shows a 3 segment firing. Two segments were used on the way up in temperature. Another segment was added for controlled cooling.

To figure how many hours a segment will take to fire, subtract the current temperature from the target temperature and divide the result by the heating rate. In the diagram in the left column, the firing time is 1250° - 80° (room temperature) = 1170 ÷ 625 = 1.87 hours.

After the Sentry has finished firing the last segment, it will turn off power to the heating elements.

Storing “User” Programs
To program the controller in Ramp-Hold, **Idle** must appear. From **Idle** press 4, **USER** will appear. The controller is ready for you to choose a stored program or to enter a new one. (See next page for programming instructions.)

The controller can hold 9 programs in memory. They stay in memory even when the power is turned off. Stored programs are numbered 1 through 9. User program 1 can have up to 20 segments. User programs 2 - 9 can have 10 segments each. You don’t have to use all the segments available—use only the number needed. Sometimes one segment is all you will need.

When you program a Ramp-Hold firing, you will be asked to enter a rate for each segment. Step 7, Programming Instructions, next page, shows you how to zero out the segments you don’t need.

When entering a Ramp-Hold program for the first time, press 1 after **USER** appears. Your first firing will be stored as Program 1.
Each time you store another program, select the next available number, such as 2, at the USER prompt. Selecting a number for a new program over-writes (erases) any program stored there. Write down your user programs for quick reference. (Make copies of the blank form on page 37.)

Note: For repeat firings that you don’t want to inadvertently change, see Program Lock, page 24.

Firing a Stored User Program

After you enter a new program and the display shows Idle, the new program is in memory and ready to fire.

Selecting a different stored program takes only seconds:

1. From Idle press 4.
2. USER will appear. Enter the program number (1 - 9).
3. If there are no changes to the program, press STOP twice. Idle will appear. The controller is ready to fire your selected program. To begin firing, press ENTER once.

Note: Use Program Review, page 7, before firing. See also “Repeat Firings,” page 6.

Ramp-Hold Programming

Use these instructions for your first firings. Later you may prefer “Ramp-Hold Shorthand Instructions,” back cover.

As you follow these steps, you will see values (temperatures, rates, etc.) from the last firing. To use these again, press ENTER. To program a controlled cooling, set the segment to a lower target temperature than that of the preceding segment.

To fire without Alarm or Delay: Follow steps 1 through 7. Then press START once.

1. Apply power to the kiln. 8888 then Idle will appear. (Press ENTER if Idle does not appear.)
2. Press 4. USER will appear. Enter a program number from 1 to 9.
3. Press ENTER, RA 1 will appear. Enter firing rate for segment 1 (temperature change per hour: from 1° to 9999°).
4. Press ENTER, F1 (or C1) will appear. Enter the target temperature of segment 1.
5. Press ENTER, Id 1 will appear. Enter segment 1 hold time in hours / minutes (e.g. 12 hours, 30 minutes = 12.30). No hold = 00.00.
6. Press ENTER. If FN 1 appears, and you have an AOP receptacle on your kiln, use the 1 or 2 key to select ON or OFF. Press ENTER. (For more details on AOP, see page 16.)
7. Continue entering values for the segments needed. When RA appears for the first segment you don’t need, press 0, then ENTER. Idle will appear. The kiln is ready to fire.
8. To set Alarm: press 7.ALAR will appear. Enter alarm temperature. (Enter 0 to turn alarm off.) Then press ENTER. Alarm will appear.
9. To set Delay: press 3. DELA will appear. Enter delay time (i.e. 12 hours, 30 minutes = 12.30). Then press ENTER. DELA will appear. (Delay zeroes out after each completed firing.)
10. To start program: From Idle press ENTER once. STRT will appear, then kiln temperature. If a delay was programmed, DELA will appear, then time remaining until start. To stop the firing at any time, press STOP.

We recommend using Program Review (page 7) before firing. When program fires to completion, CPLT will appear. Press ENTER, Idle will appear.

Rate

Each segment must include a rate, which is the firing speed of that segment. We measure rate as degrees per hour. This is similar to miles per hour; just replace miles with degrees. During programming, enter the rate when RA appears. (RA will also include the segment number: RA 1 RA 2 etc.)

The diagram above shows three rates. A rate of 1000° per hour will reach 1000° in 1 hour. A rate of 500° will reach 1000° in 2 hours. A rate of 333° will reach 1000° in 3 hours.

If you want the kiln to fire at full speed, enter a rate of 9999. See step 3, next column.
**Note:** In Program Review, a heating rate of 9999 is displayed as **FULL**. When a kiln is heated at full power, it may overshoot the target temperature, especially in the lower range. To avoid this, add an extra segment with a slower rate for the last 50 degrees of temperature rise.

**CAUTION:** The Sentry includes error messages to warn you when the kiln is at the wrong temperature. Firing the kiln at full rate turns off some of these warnings. See TEdE, Temperature Deviation, page 24, and HTdE, High Temperature Deviation, page 27.

If you are not sure how fast to fire, remember an old firing adage: When in doubt, slow it down.

**Note:** At the time that you purchase the controller, the factory can set up your controller to calculate rate in one of three ways: 1) degrees of temperature change per hour 2) degrees of temperature change per minute, or 3) elapsed time needed to reach a temperature. The normal setting is degrees per hour. If you are having problems entering rate, check the RATE option to be sure your controller is set for degrees per hour, page 23. (This note applies only to 18D and later software versions. All pre-18D controllers figure rate only as degrees per hour. See page 25, SOFT option, to look up software version.)

### Hold (HOLDed)

Hold is the length of time that you want the kiln to remain at the target temperature. Hold is also called soak or dwell time. Hold gives the temperature time to become more even throughout the kiln. Hold can be used in either heating-up or cooling-down segments.

**Ceramics:** Wearing firing safety glasses, watch the witness cone near the end of the firing. (See page 10.) When the witness cone bends, note the hold time. The next time you fire the same type of ware loaded to the same capacity, program that amount of hold time.

**Note:** When the Sentry is in hold during a firing, the display will alternate between time left in hold and the temperature. To figure hold time needed for the next firing, subtract time left in hold from total hold time entered.

In programming step 5, page 15, enter hold time. When hold is set to 99.99 hours, the Sentry will remain at that temperature indefinitely until you press **STOP**.

### AOP Fan

The optional AOP (auxiliary output) is a special-order electric receptacle mounted in the kiln’s switch box. This receptacle can power a kiln vent or external alarm. (See Options, page 22.) During programming, **FN** will appear for each segment (**FN 1** **FN 2** **FN 3** etc.). Use the 1 and 2 keys to select On or Off for each segment. **FN** will appear only if the AOP has been activated in the AOP Option.

### Programming a Cooling Segment

For controlled cooling, program a segment to a lower target temperature than that of the preceding segment.

Example: You fire at a rate of 500°F per hour to 1450°F with your first segment. Then you want the kiln to cool at a rate of 100°F per hour down to 700°F. Here is how you would program the two segments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate °F/°C</th>
<th>Temp. °F/°C</th>
<th>Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>500 / 277</td>
<td>1450 / 788</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>100 / 55</td>
<td>700 / 371</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first segment is the heating segment. The second one is the cooling segment. The controller does not use minus numbers for cooling. Just enter a lower target temperature than that of the previous segment.

If you prop the lid or door for a fast cooling, program a fast cooling rate for that segment. If you lower the temperature quickly by propping the lid but program a slow cooling rate, the controller will just raise the temperature again.

Example: Some glass artists flash-cool the glass just after it fuses. They open the door a few inches to remove heat, then close it again. This takes the glass down rapidly through the devitrification range. To program a flash-cool, use a rate of 9999. This shuts off the heating elements during that segment, allowing the kiln to cool rapidly.

**Note:** During fast cooling, do not open the door all the way. Do not force-cool the kiln with a fan.

**Note:** See Temperature Deviation (TEdE), page 24, for information on error codes that may appear during “crash” cooling. To turn these codes off, program a crash cooling rate of 9999. This turns off TEdE error codes only for that particular segment. The TEdE codes still work on the hold and the other segments.

Suppose you enter a cooling rate that is faster than the kiln can cool! Depending on the rate you enter, you may get an alarm message. (Press **ENTER** to turn off the alarm.) **The controller, of course, cannot speed cooling beyond the kiln’s natural cooling rate.**

### Temperature Overshoot

When a kiln is heated too fast, it may overshoot the target temperature, especially in small kilns at lower temperatures. To avoid this, add an extra segment to slow the firing. The segment with the slower rate should begin approximately 40° - 60° below the final target temperature.

### A Practice Program

To practice using the controller, we will enter a program that includes three segments. The last segment is a cooling segment.
Using the programming instructions on page 15, enter this firing schedule. Then use Program Review to check for accuracy.

| USER = 1 | RA1 = 250 | °F 1 = 750 |
| RA2 = 900 | °F 2 = 1425 |
| RA3 = 150 | °F 3 = 750 |
| RA4 = 0 | °C 3 = 750 |
| Hd 1 = 00.00 | Hd 2 = 00.30 |

Note: Enter 0 for the rate in segment 4. This zeroes out all the segments past segment 3.

**Sample Firing Schedules**

These sample firing schedules illustrate different ways to program the Sentry. When designing a firing schedule for materials you are unfamiliar with, or when using one of these schedules, always test-fire samples first. This is because these generalized schedules may not suit the clay or glass that you use.

For practice, you might want to enter these programs even though you may never actually use them.

**Cone-Fire Program Customized in Ramp-Hold**

This is the cone 04 Cone-Fire schedule at standard (Medium) speed with an added slow-cooling segment. (See Cone-Fire schedules on pages 32 - 33.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate °F/°C</th>
<th>Temp. °F/°C</th>
<th>Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>324/180</td>
<td>1022/550</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>153/85</td>
<td>1112/600</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>180/100</td>
<td>1837/1003</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>108/60</td>
<td>1945/1063</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>150/83</td>
<td>1000/537</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this schedule, the kiln will cool at 150°F/83°C per hour to 1000°F/537°C. Some ceramists use slow cooling to enhance certain glazes.

If you fire at a very rapid rate, the kiln may momentarily overshoot the programmed target temperature. To avoid that, use a slower rate.

**Sculptured Stoneware Bisque Firing Schedule, Cone 04**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate °F/°C</th>
<th>Temp. °F/°C</th>
<th>Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>60/33</td>
<td>200/93</td>
<td>03.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>80/44</td>
<td>700/371</td>
<td>02.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>80/44</td>
<td>1100/593</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>108/60</td>
<td>1945/1062</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>150/83</td>
<td>1400/760</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This slow firing is for thick stoneware. Change the target temperature in segment 4 when firing to a different pyrometric cone. The ware should be bone dry. Test samples until you are sure the schedule works for your ware.

If you are not using a kiln vent, leave peephole plugs out and vent the lid. Set the alarm to 1000°F. When the alarm sounds, close the lid from venting position.

Set the alarm again, this time to 1850°F. When it sounds, check the witness cone through the peephole. When the cone bends to six o’clock, write down the temperature. (Use that temperature in segment 4 on your next firing of the same type of ware.) Then press 9, ENTER (Skip Segment).

This will advance you to segment 5, a slow cooling segment. Do not open the lid until the kiln has cooled to room temperature.

**Glass Fusing Firing Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate °F/°C</th>
<th>Temp. °F/°C</th>
<th>Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>250/138</td>
<td>750 / 398</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>900 / 500</td>
<td>1425 / 773</td>
<td>00.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9999 / 9999</td>
<td>1050 / 565</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>150 / 83</td>
<td>750 / 398</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stained glass, 1/8”, 2 layers, full fuse. The fusing temperature will vary depending on the brand of glass, the batch, and even the color. Vent the lid. Set the alarm to 500°F. When the alarm sounds, close the lid from venting position and insert peephole plugs.

Set the alarm again, this time to 1350°F. When it sounds, check the glass through the peephole. When the glass fuses to your satisfaction, write down the temperature and hold time for future firings, and press 9, then ENTER (Skip Segment).

This will advance the kiln to segment 3, a flash cooling segment. Lift the kiln lid slightly or open the door ajar until the temperature drops to 1050°F. Then close the door / lid. The kiln will cool slowly through the annealing range, then turn off.

**Note:** A cooling rate of 9999 (FULL) shuts off the warning alarm (error message) that sometimes sounds during rapid cooling. This turns off the alarm only for that particular ramp. The alarm codes still work on the hold and the other programmed segments.

For details about error messages, see pages 26 - 28.
Glass Slumping Firing Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Rate °F / °C</th>
<th>Temp. °F / °C</th>
<th>Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>250 / 138</td>
<td>750 / 398</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>900 / 500</td>
<td>1250 / 676</td>
<td>00.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9999 / 9999</td>
<td>1050 / 565</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>150 / 83</td>
<td>750 / 398</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stained glass, 1/4", 2 fused layers, 12" circular pieces, slumped into a bowl. Set the alarm to 500° F. When the alarm sounds, close the lid from venting position and insert peephole plugs.

Set the alarm again, this time to 1150° F. When it sounds, check the glass through the peephole. When the glass slumps into the bowl, write down the temperature and hold time for future firings, and press ENTER (Skip Segment).

This will advance the kiln to segment 3, a flash cooling segment. Lift the kiln lid slightly or open the door ajar until the temperature drops to 1050° F. Then close the door/lid. The kiln will cool slowly through the annealing range. Then it will turn off and cool to room temperature.

Note: A cooling rate of 9999 (FULL) shuts off the warning alarm (error message) that sometimes sounds during rapid cooling. This turns off the alarm only for that particular ramp. The alarm codes still work on the hold and the other programmed segments. For details about error messages, see pages 26 - 28.

Starting a Firing in a Hot Kiln

Sometimes a firing begins in a hot kiln after a power failure or other interruption. In this case, the Sentry will begin firing from the first segment that matches the current temperature. See Power Failures, page 28.

When the Kiln Shuts Off Too Soon

Ceramic Firings

If the kiln fires to completion before the pyrometric witness cone bends, you can turn the kiln back on and keep firing. First, program a hotter temperature. Then from IDLE, press START. The kiln will begin firing, taking up where it left off.

Note: By looking at the witness cones through a peephole, you will know if the kiln shuts off too soon.

If the kiln shuts off within 100°F/55°C of maturity, and the temperature drops 50°F/28°C or more after the kiln shuts off, do not depend on the witness cones. Once they cool 50°F/28°C after they have been heated to within 100°F/55°C of maturity, they will not bend properly. This is because they form a hard shell.

Wrong Thermocouple Type

If a Type-K thermocouple is installed on your kiln, but Type-S is selected in Options, the kiln will continually underfire by a wide margin. (The kiln will overfire if Type-S is installed and Type-K is selected.) See page 22 to check the thermocouple type selected in Options.

Chapter 5

Multiple Zone Kilns

An Overview of Multiple-Zone Firing

If you are not sure how many zones your kiln has, look into the firing chamber. The number of thermocouple tips indicates the number of zones.

In single-zone kilns, the Sentry measures temperature from one location. When the controller turns on the heat, all the elements turn on.

With two and three zone kilns, the Sentry measures temperature from each individual zone. It then adjusts the heat separately for each zone to improve temperature uniformity.

To maintain even temperature, the Sentry calculates not only temperature difference between zones, but also length of time needed to change temperature. By carefully timing heat output, it maintains even temperature with a minimal loss in firing speed.

Note: Multiple-zone kilns use the same Cone-Fire and Ramp-Hold programming instructions as single-zone kilns.

Look into the firing chamber. The number of thermocouple tips indicates the number of zones.

Keep a record of your stored programs and all your firings. Write down the results of each firing. This may become invaluable later.

Thermocouple Failure In a Multiple-Zone Kiln

In a multiple-zone kiln, if a thermocouple fails, the firing will continue as a single-zone kiln so long as one thermocouple still operates. FAIL will appear, alternating with the thermocouple that failed. (See page 26 for multiple-zone thermocouple error messages.)

Power Output Lights

The three lights on the right of the temperature display turn on when the controller sends a signal to the relays.
The Sentry is packed with features. Do not let this intimidate you. Become familiar with only the features you need; ignore the rest.
1. First, program a Cone-Fire.

2. After programming a Cone-Fire, Idle will appear. From Idle, press OPTIONS until Spd appears.

3. Press ENTER. Use the 1 or 2 key to scroll through this selection:
   - Std: Same as Medium in cone programming
   - F10: 10% faster than standard
   - F20: Same as Fast in cone programming
   - F30: 30% faster than standard
   - F40: 40% faster than standard
   - S40: 40% slower than standard
   - S30: 30% slower than standard
   - S20: Same as Slow in cone programming
   - S10: 10% slower than standard

   When the speed of choice appears, press ENTER.

4. To go back to Idle, press STOP.

The kiln is now ready to fire with the new speed.

**OFST / Cone Offset**

**Calibrate Cone-Fire to a Shelf Cone**

Sometimes the pyrometric cone programmed in Cone-Fire does not match the bending of the witness cone. Cone Offset will adjust Cone-Fire to fire hotter or cooler.

Each time you use Cone Offset, you alter the temperature for only one of the three ranges of cones:

- Low fire cones 022 - 011
- Medium fire cones 010 - 01
- High fire cones 1 - 10

The range of cones affected by Cone Offset is determined by the cone programmed to fire when you enter Cone Offset.

Example: You have programmed an 05 cone in Cone-Fire. By changing Cone Offset, you change not only the firing of the 05 cone, but all medium fire cones from 010 to 01.

Adjusting one range of cones has no effect on the other two. To adjust all the cones equally, use Thermocouple Offsets, page 21.

**Note:** Use Cone Offset to adjust one particular temperature range of cones. Use Thermocouple Offset to make an overall adjustment for all firings in both Cone-Fire and Ramp-Hold.

Follow these guidelines before deciding that you need to use Cone Offset:

- The thermocouple must protrude into the firing chamber the correct distance: about 1” for ¼” wide thermocouples, ½” - 5/8” for 1/8” wide thermocouples.

- Keep shelves 1” - 1 ½” away from the thermocouple.
- Keep witness cones at least 2” away from heating elements.
- Place witness cones in several locations in the kiln.

**How to Use Cone Offset**

Cone Offset changes the shut-off point of the cone by the degrees of temperature shown in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>°F Setting</th>
<th>°C Setting</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kiln will fire hotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kiln will fire hotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kiln will fire hotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kiln will fire hotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-5</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>Kiln will fire cooler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>Kiln will fire cooler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-15</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>Kiln will fire cooler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-11</td>
<td>Kiln will fire cooler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cone Offsets remain in memory for future firings unless you use the Reset option (page 25).

**Interpreting Cone Bending**

Position the witness cone in the kiln according to instructions on page 10.

The cone bent to 6 o’clock: No calibration in Cone Offset needed. The self-supporting cone has fired to maturity when the tip is even with the cone base as shown.

The cone did not bend far enough: Use a positive Cone Offset number for a hotter firing, such as 10 (°F).
The cone bent too far: Use a negative Cone Offset for a cooler firing, such as -10°F.

**Note:** Do not be overly concerned with achieving an exact 6 o’clock bend. The difference between a 3 o’clock and a 6 o’clock bend is only a few degrees.

**When Cone Temperature Is Off More Than 20°F/11°C**

The maximum amount that Cone Offset can change the temperature is 20°F/11°C. When the temperature is off more than that amount, correct with Thermocouple Offset.

**FAN**

**Control the Optional AOP Receptacle in Cone-Fire**

The AOP (auxiliary output) is a special-order kiln switch box receptacle. The Sentry controls the power to the AOP receptacle. The AOP is usually used to power a kiln vent. In the Fan option, select when an AOP-powered kiln vent will turn on during Cone-Fire.

Before the Fan option will appear on the Options list, (1) you must enter a Cone-Fire program in active memory and (2) you must select **VFAN** in the AOP1 or AOP2 option. (See page 22 for instructions on selecting **VFAN**.)

1. From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **FAN** appears.
2. Press **ENTER**. Use the 1 and 2 keys to select one of these settings:
   - **ON** The vent is on during Pre-Heat, the cone firing, and Slow Cooling. It turns off at 212°F/100°C.
   - **OPT** The vent is on during Pre-Heat and the cone firing. Then it shuts off. (It is off during Slow Cooling.)
   - **OFF** The vent is off all the time.
3. After selecting one of the above, press **ENTER**. Press **STOP** to return to **IdLE**.

**Note:** If the temperature is above 1650°F/900°C and the kiln is struggling to reach temperature, the vent fan will automatically turn off.

**General Options**

General options are available on all Sentry controllers.

**TCOS / Thermocouple Offset**

**Calibrate the Thermocouple(s)**

The thermocouple is the rod protruding into the firing chamber. It measures temperature. Thermocouples can “drift” as they age, causing a shift in temperature readings. Thermocouple Offset calibrates the controller to compensate for drift.

**Note:** The thermocouple must protrude into the firing chamber the correct distance: 1” for ¼” wide thermocouples, ½” - ¾” for ⅛” wide thermocouples.

**Thermocouple Offset for Ceramic Firings**

In ceramics, Cone Offset (see page 20) adjusts only one range of pyrometric cones without affecting the other cones. Thermocouple Offset, on the other hand, affects all cones and all Ramp-Hold firings equally. For example, a 5° hotter setting in Thermocouple Offset fires everything 5° hotter.

**Note:** If you find that all your cones are consistently under- or over-firing, adjust Thermocouple Offset. If you need to adjust only a particular cone, use Cone Offset.

**Calibrating Thermocouple Offset With a Digital Pyrometer**

You can calibrate Thermocouple Offset using a calibrated digital pyrometer. One way to calibrate your pyrometer is to take it to a heat treater or other location that has a calibrated controller you can trust. Take a reading from a furnace with your pyrometer. Either zero it out to match the calibrated controller on the furnace, or write down the temperature difference between your pyrometer and the reliable source. Store your pyrometer. Use it only for calibrating controllers. Thus, it remains a reliable calibration standard.

**Note:** The temperature at which you calibrated your digital pyrometer should be the same temperature you use to check the controller’s temperature readout. Example: If you took a reading from a reliable source at 2000°F, you should check the controller reading at around 2000°F.

Mount the thermocouple of the calibrated pyrometer in the firing chamber near the Sentry’s thermocouple. With the Sentry on Hold, compare readings between the Sentry and the calibrated pyrometer. Adjust Thermocouple Offset to compensate for any temperature difference between them.

**Note:** You can also return your controller to the factory to have it calibrated on certified test equipment.

**Setting Thermocouple Offset**

You can enter a temperature change up to 45°F/25°C higher or lower than the zero factory setting.

1. From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **TCOS** appears.
2. Press **ENTER**. **CO** or a Thermocouple Offset, will appear.
3. Using the 1 and 2 keys, enter the new offset. (See chart on next page.) Press **ENTER**. **TCOS** will appear. To return to **IdLE**, press **STOP**.
Thermocouple Offset Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>°F Setting</th>
<th>°C Setting</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C 0</td>
<td>C 0</td>
<td>No adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 1-45</td>
<td>H 1-25</td>
<td>Kiln will fire hotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 1-45</td>
<td>C 1-25</td>
<td>Kiln will fire cooler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thermocouple Offset Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H 1</td>
<td>Kiln will fire 1° hotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 17</td>
<td>Kiln will fire 17° hotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 12</td>
<td>Kiln will fire 12° cooler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multiple-Zone Thermocouple Offset

1. From **Idle**, press OPTIONS repeatedly until TCOS appears.
2. Press ENTER. TC1° (top thermocouple) will appear.
3. While TC1° displays, press OPTIONS. The other thermocouple(s), then TCOS, will appear with each press of the OPTIONS key.
   - 3 zone kilns: TC1° TC2° TC3° TCOS
   - 2 zone kilns: TC1° TC3° TCOS
4. When the correct thermocouple appears, press ENTER.
5. Using the 1 and 2 keys, enter the new offset. (See charts above.) Press ENTER. The thermocouple you adjusted (i.e. TC1°) will appear. Select another thermocouple, or return to **Idle** by pressing STOP.

CHG- / Selecting °F or °C

The controller operates in your choice of Fahrenheit or Celsius temperature. In °C display, a lighted dot appears in the lower right. In °F, it disappears. To switch from °F to °C or vice versa:

1. From **Idle**, press OPTIONS repeatedly until CHG- appears.
2. Press ENTER. Use the 1 and 2 keys to select °F or °C.
3. After selecting one of the above, press ENTER. Press STOP to return to **Idle**.

°F/°C Temperature Conversion Formulas

Below are formulas for converting temperature between °F and °C. Converting a firing rate requires a different formula than converting a firing temperature:

Firing to a Temperature

(i.e. “Fire to 1600°F.” 1600°F = 871°C)

\[(°C \times 1.8) + 32 = °F\]

\[(°F - 32) \div 1.8 = °C\]

Firing Rate or Temperature Change

(i.e. “Fire at 200°F per hour” or “Fire 200°F hotter.” 200°F = 111°C)

-22 Cone-Fire / Ramp-Hold

TC / Thermocouple Type

Select Type-K, -S or -R Thermocouple

The Sentry can use Type-K, -S or -R thermocouples. If you specialize in firings above 2200°F / 1204°C, you should use the Type-S or -R. Type-K is best suited for temperatures below 2200°F / 1204°C.

The controller cannot detect the type of thermocouple installed in your kiln. So if you change the thermocouple to a different type, be sure to select the new thermocouple type in TC option.

Note: Ask your kiln supplier if you are not sure about the type of thermocouple in your kiln.

CAUTION: Be careful about changing the thermocouple type! If you select Type-S or -R, but your kiln is wired with a Type-K, your kiln will underfire. If you select Type-K and your kiln is wired with a Type-S or -R, your kiln will OVERFIRE. After using the Reset (RST) option (page 25), use the TC option to select the correct thermocouple. Reset changes the thermocouple selection to Type-S.

AOP1, AOP2 / Auxiliary Outlets

Select Vent Fan or Alarm for the Auxiliary Outputs

The optional AOP1 and AOP2 (Auxiliary Outputs) are for electrical receptacles mounted in the kiln’s switch box. The outlets can each power a kiln vent or an external alarm, such as a bell. (The AOP outlet is a special-order option that might not be included on your kiln.)

The choices in the AOP1 and AOP2 options:

- **ALRM** Alarm: This choice sends power to the AOP receptacle whenever the alarm sounds. (See Temperature Alarm, page 8.) Plug in a loud bell to alert you, from a distance, that the kiln has reached the alarm temperature. (Controllers with pre-20A software: Select F2A3)
- **NONE** None: Use this setting if your kiln does not have the AOP outlet.
- **VFAN** Kiln Vent or Gas Outlet: This option adds a prompt for fan (FN) to each segment during Ramp-Hold programming (page 15). (Controllers with...
pre-20A software: Select A2F3 or FAN3—whichever appears.)

1. From IdLE, press OPTIONS repeatedly until AOP1 or AOP2 appears.
2. Press ENTER. Use the 1 and 2 keys to select VFAN ALRM or NONE.
3. After selecting one of the above, press ENTER. Press STOP to return to IdLE.

RATE / Types of Rates

Note: This feature is included on controllers with software version 18D or newer. To look up your software version, see the SOFT option, page 25.

The standard method of programming firing rate is degrees of temperature change per HOUR. At the factory, we can set up your controller to calculate rate instead as degrees of temperature change per MINUTE, or as ELAPSED TIME needed to reach a temperature. The RATE option shows you which method your controller uses:

1. From IdLE, press OPTIONS repeatedly until RATE appears.
2. Press ENTER. You will see one of the following:
   - HOUR (Degrees of temperature change per hour)
   - MIN (Degrees of temperature change per minute)
   - TIME (Elapsed time needed to reach a temperature)

Only the factory can change the type of rate used in your controller.

Note: If your controller uses TIME rate, enter the hours/minutes that each segment will take to reach its target temperature. (Example: 1 hour, 30 minutes = 01.30.)

COST / Electric Cost Per Kilowatt-Hour

Note: This feature is included on controllers with software version 18D or newer. To look up your software version, see the SOFT option, page 25.

The controller can figure the cost of a firing if you enter the cost of electricity for your area (and kiln wattage—see next option). The cost of electricity is figured in kilowatt-hours (KWh). A kilowatt-hour is 1,000 watts of electricity running for 1 hour. (10 – 100-watt light bulbs glowing for one hour consume 1 KWh of electricity.)

To find what the power company charges you for a kilowatt-hour, look at your electric bill, call your power company, or visit their website. The electric rate may vary depending on the time of year and amount of electricity you use. In the summer, rates in some areas are higher. Also, add the other costs listed on your electric bill, such as power transmission charges, taxes, etc.

1. From IdLE, press OPTIONS repeatedly until COST appears. Press ENTER.
2. From an electric bill, enter the cost of a kilowatt-hour. Place cents to the right of the decimal. Round off fractions. (Example: Enter 9.25 cents per kilowatt-hour as 00.09.) Press ENTER.
3. Press STOP to return to IdLE.

Note: You can enter the cost in U. S., Canadian, or Euro cents, British pence, Indian paisas, or any other money system that is based upon 100 units (i.e. 100 cents = 1 dollar.) If your system is based upon 1000 units, such as the Libyan dinar, the Oman baiza, or the Kuwaiti fils, divide the cost by 10. Example: Enter 140 as 00.14. Then multiply by 10 the cost of a firing shown in the controller display.

KW / Kilowatts Used to Calculate Firing Cost

Note: This feature is included on controllers with software version 18D or newer. To look up your software version, see the SOFT option, page 25.

To figure the cost to fire your kiln, the controller needs to know how many kilowatts your kiln uses. Look at your kiln’s electrical data plate. It is usually on the side of the switch box. The data plate lists the watts, amps, and volts. If watts are not listed, multiply amps x volts. (Example: 15 amps x 240 volts = 3,600 watts.)

Divide the wattage of your kiln by 1000, which gives the kilowatts. (Move the decimal point 3 spaces to the left.)

Examples:
- 10,800 watts ÷ 1000 = 010.8
- 4,800 watts ÷ 1000 = 004.8
- 800 watts ÷ 1000 = 000.8

Enter that amount in the KW option:
1. From IdLE, press OPTIONS repeatedly until KW appears. Press ENTER.
2. The controller shows 4 digits for entering kilowatts: 000.0. Enter kilowatts for your kiln.
3. Press ENTER.
4. Press STOP to return to IdLE.

Note: Please do not confuse kilowatts with kilowatt-hours. A kilowatt is 1,000 watts. A kilowatt-hour is 1,000 watts powered for one hour.

To view the cost of a firing, press the 8 key after the kiln has fired to completion and CPLT flashes.

23
Id / Computer ID
Enter an ID Number for Connection to a Computer
This feature is for assigning an identification number, from 1 to 15, to the controller. It is used only for hookup to a personal computer, which requires an optional kit.

1. From IdLE, press OPTIONS repeatedly until Id appears.
2. Press ENTER. Use the 1 and 2 keys to select an ID number from 1 to 15. Press ENTER. Press STOP to return to IdLE.

TEdE / Temperature Deviation
Adjust Temperature Sensitivity of Error Codes
The temperature that the controller is trying to reach, at any given time, is called the set point. During heating or cooling, the set point changes at the rate you programmed. During a hold, the set point remains steady.

The Sentry shows error messages when it can’t maintain the set point temperature. The cushion, or leeway, allowed before an error message flashes is called Temperature Deviation. When the temperature is off target by more than the Temperature Deviation setting, the alarm sounds. Temperature Deviation affects these error messages (see page 26):

- FTH: Fail to Heat
- FTC: Fail to Cool
- LTdE: Low Temperature Deviation

Note: On controllers that have pre-18D software, the TEdE setting also affects the HTdE High Temperature Deviation alarm (page 27). On 18D and later controllers, the HTdE setting is always 100°F / 56°C.

Some people worry when FTH, FTC or LTdE appears. They wonder if something is wrong with the kiln. Here are four ways to stop the alarm messages from appearing during routine firings:

Method 1: Test your kiln to find its fastest firing rate and its slowest cooling rate. Then program the controller using rates within the range of the kiln’s heating/cooling capacity. Example: If your fastest heating rate is 600°F per hour, enter a rate no faster than 600°F.

Method 2: Set the deviation temperature to a higher number in the TEdE option. The higher the number, the less likely that an alarm message will appear.

Method 3: Set the deviation temperature to 0 in the TEdE option. This turns off the FTH, FTC and LTdE alarms (page 26). We do not recommend a 0 setting.

Method 4: Program a segment at FULL rate (9999°F). This will shut off the deviation alarms for that segment. (However, deviation alarms will continue to work during the hold and all other segments with slower rates.)

CAUTION: The High Temperature Deviation (HTdE) alarm shuts off the kiln to prevent an overfire. On controllers with pre-18D software, entering a temperature deviation of 0 turns off this important alarm! On all controllers, entering a FULL rate also turns off this alarm for the segment with the FULL rate.

Changing the Deviation Temperature
1. From IdLE, press OPTIONS repeatedly until TEdE appears.
2. Press ENTER. Change the deviation temperature. The higher the number, the less likely you will activate the alarms.
3. Press ENTER. Press STOP to return to IdLE.

Note: The factory default TEdE setting is 100°F / 56°C.

Example: The Fail to Heat code FTH appears during a firing when the kiln cannot heat as fast as programmed. The Temperature Deviation TEdE is set to 100°F / 56°C. The Fail to Heat code will appear if the temperature is 100°F / 56°C or more below the set point.

SFTY / Maximum Temperature
View the Kiln’s Maximum Operating Temperature
From IdLE press OPTIONS repeatedly until SFTY appears. Press ENTER. The temperature displayed is the maximum operating temperature programmed in the Sentry for your kiln. (This temperature is also shown on the kiln’s electrical data plate.) It can be altered only at the factory. The controller will not fire hotter than that temperature. Press ENTER. Press STOP to return to IdLE.

ELEC / Electronics Temperature
Check the Circuit Board Temperature
High temperatures in the switch box can damage the controller circuit board, which is rated for 176°F / 80°C maximum operating temperature. To lower board temperature, use a fan to blow air across the kiln switch box into the louvers. (But do not blow air into the kiln’s peepholes.) When firing several kilns, position them at least three feet apart to allow adequate air circulation.

If you repeat the same firing program often, use Program Lock so that it cannot be inadvertently changed.

Lock / Program Lock
Make a Program Tamper-Proof
With Program Lock activated, a stored Cone-Fire or Ramp-Hold program cannot be altered or removed from memory. Use Program Lock for repeat firings that you don’t want to inadvertently change.
**Note:** Program Lock does not save a Delay setting. While a program is locked, you can enter a new Delay.

1. From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **LOCK** appears.
2. Press **ENTER**. **LO** (locked) or **UN** (unlocked) will appear.
3. To change the setting, press **DELAY** 3 times.
4. Press **ENTER**. Press **STOP** to return to **IdLE**.

---

**CFG / Configuration Code**

From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **CFG** appears. Press **ENTER**. The factory configuration code will appear. Press **ENTER**. Press **STOP** to return to **IdLE**. The configuration code can be changed only at the factory.

---

**SOFt / Software Version**

From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **SOFt** appears. Press **ENTER**. The software version will appear. Press **ENTER**. Press **STOP** to return to **IdLE**. The software version can be changed only at the factory.

---

**TEST / Element Test**

**Test the Heating Elements and Relays**

This test is useful when measuring the wall receptacle voltage under load, and amperage with an ammeter. On a multiple-zone kiln, the test helps determine if the relays and thermocouples are wired to the correct zones. If you test thermocouples with a cigarette lighter or other heat source, use this option.

**Single-Zone Kiln**

1. From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **TEST** appears.
2. Press **ENTER**. **POWR** will appear, alternating with kiln temperature. The elements will turn on for two minutes. Press any key to abort the test.

**Multiple-Zone Kiln**

1. From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **TEST** appears.
2. Press **ENTER**. **TOP** will appear, alternating with the temperature of the top zone. The elements will turn on for two minutes. Then **MID** will appear, with temperature for the middle zone, and **BOT** with temperature for the bottom zone. (A two-zone kiln shows **TOP** and **BOT** displays only.)
3. During the two-minute test, press any key to end a zone test. The controller will then begin to test the next zone.

**AOP Outlet**

After the above test, kilns equipped with the AOP outlet will display **J3-3** for two minutes to test power to the AOP outlet.

---

**RST / Reset**

**Reset the Controller to Most Factory Defaults:**

Perform Only When Requested by a Technician

Reset does the following:

- Selects Type-S thermocouple.
- Selects °F.
- Erases Cone offsets.
- Erases any thermocouple offset.
- Erases Ramp-Hold User programs stored in memory.
- Changes Temperature Deviation (TEdE) back to the factory setting of 100°F / 56°C.

**CAUTION:** If your kiln uses a Type-K thermocouple, the Sentry will underfire after a reset! Use the Thermocouple Option (page 22) to select Type-K again.

1. From **IdLE**, press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **RST** appears.
2. Press **ENTER**. Use the 1 or 2 key to select **NO** or **YES**.
3. After selecting one of the above, press **ENTER**. Press **STOP** to return to **IdLE**.

---

**Multiple-Zone Options**

These options appear only on multiple-zone kilns.

**DIFF / Zone Temperature Difference**

**View Maximum Temperature Spread**

For a two-zone kiln, this option shows temperature difference between the zones. For a three-zone kiln, it shows the highest temperature difference between any two zones. If the temperature shown is larger than expected, go to option T123 to view the temperature of each zone.

1. Press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **DIFF** appears. Press **ENTER**.
2. The maximum difference in temperature between any zones will display. (Example: **-003** = 3°)

**T123 / Zone Temperature Display**

**View Temperature of Each Zone**

1. Press **OPTIONS** repeatedly until **T123** appears. Press **ENTER**.
2. The temperature for each zone will display one after the other, cycling for one minute. Then normal temperature display will return. For example:

- **Top zone:** **TC 1** | **1250**
- **Middle zone:** **TC 2** | **1251**
- **Bottom zone:** **TC 3** | **1249**
Chapter 7
Error Messages

- Error messages are accompanied by an alarm.
- Non-interrupting messages do not stop the firing. Terminating error messages do.
- FTH, FTC, and LTdE error messages are based upon the adjustable setting in the Temperature Deviation (TEDe) option (page 24).

Note: On controllers with pre-18D software, the HTdE error message is also based on the TEDe option.

Non-Interrupting Error Messages

Press ENTER to silence the alarm. (Do not press STOP to silence the alarm.) The error message will remain but the kiln will continue firing. Even though the following error messages appear, the kiln will continue its normal operation. The messages are only to alert you that the kiln could not cool or heat as fast as you had programmed. But they will not shut off the kiln or affect the firing in any way.

Definition of “Set Point”
The temperature that the controller is trying to reach, at any given time, is called the set point. During heating or cooling, the set point changes at the rate you programmed. During a hold, the set point remains steady.

FTC / Failed to Cool
- During a cooling-down ramp, the programmed rate is faster than the kiln can cool. The temperature is above the set point temperature by more than the deviation setting. (See Temperature Deviation, page 24.) Program a slower cooling rate.

Note: On controllers with 18D and later software: Use Present Status to compare the actual rate of the current Ramp-Hold segment with the rate you programmed. (See page 7.)

FTH / Failed to Heat
- During a heating-up ramp, the programmed rate is faster than the kiln can heat. The temperature is below the set point temperature by more than the deviation setting. (See Temperature Deviation, page 24.) Program a slower rate. Or check for worn or burned out elements, defective relays, low voltage and defective thermocouple.

Note: On controllers with 18D and later software: Use Present Status to compare the actual rate of the current Ramp-Hold segment with the rate you programmed. (See page 7.)

LTdE / Low Temperature Deviation
- During a cooling-down ramp or a hold, the temperature is below the set point temperature by more than the deviation setting. (See Temperature Deviation, page 24.) Check for worn or burned out elements, defective relays, low voltage and defective thermocouple.

Note: During a firing, Present Status shows the actual firing rate of the current Ramp-Hold segment instead of the rate you programmed. If you think your kiln is heating or cooling too slowly, compare the rate shown in Present Status with the rate you programmed for that segment. This is another reason you should always keep a written record of your firing programs. (Pre-18D software versions show the programmed rate in Present Status rather than the actual rate. See page 25, SOFT option, to look up the software version.)

PF / Power Failure
PF alternating with normal display means the power failed during firing. After power was restored, the firing resumed.

TC with Lines / Multiple-Zone Kiln Thermocouple Failure
The kiln will continue to fire as long as at least one thermocouple is working. The lines following “TC” represent the position inside the kiln of the thermocouple(s) that failed.

Top line = top thermocouple
Middle line = middle thermocouple
Bottom line = bottom thermocouple

Top thermocouple failed
Middle thermocouple failed
Bottom thermocouple failed
Top and middle thermocouples failed
Top and bottom thermocouples failed
Top, bottom and middle thermocouples failed

On Sentry controllers with pre-18D software, “TC” is followed by a number and a line. You can check the software version of your controller by using the SOFT Option. See page 25.

Multiple-zone controllers with 18D or earlier software:
TC 1~ Top Thermocouple Failed
TC 2~ Middle Thermocouple Failed
TC 3~ Bottom Thermocouple Failed
Terminating Error Messages

**HTdE** ETH FAIL FTL and TCdE error messages turn off the kiln and flash the following:
- Total firing time in hours and minutes
- The kiln shutoff temperature
- The current kiln temperature

---/ No Thermocouple

After the controller was plugged in, it could not detect a thermocouple.

**BAdP** / Bad Programming

Causes:
- A program has been entered with 0 rate in the first segment of a Ramp-Hold firing.
- When you press **START**, all programmed temperatures are below the current kiln temperature of a Ramp-Hold firing.

**ETH** / Electronics Too Hot

- The circuit board temperature is above 176°F / 80°C.

To lower board temperature, use a fan to blow air across the kiln switch box into the louvers. (But do not blow air into the kiln’s peepholes.) If you have more than one kiln in the room, place them farther apart. Never allow the firing room temperature to exceed 110°F / 43°C. (Measure room temperature 3 feet away from the kiln.)

**FAIL** / Thermocouple Failure

The controller is no longer receiving voltage from the thermocouple. Causes:
- Defective thermocouple
- Disconnected thermocouple lead wires
- Defective board
- Electrical noise

**FTL** / Firing Too Long

- The temperature change is less than 27°F / 15°C per hour and the firing time is two hours longer than the current segment was programmed to fire. This message can appear during heating-up or cooling-down segments. **FTL** sometimes appears because the cooling segment was programmed faster than the kiln could naturally cool down.

- **FTL** will flash if you program a cooling segment temperature that is below room temperature. When **FTL** appears, press **STOP**.

Check for worn or burned out elements, defective relays, low voltage and defective thermocouple. Reprogram a slower rate in heating-up and cooling-down segments.

**Note:** To avoid **FTL** messages, try firing the kiln at a slower rate.

**Note:** During a Ramp-Hold firing, Present Status shows the actual firing rate of the current segment instead of the rate you programmed. If you think your kiln is heating or cooling too slowly, compare the rate shown in Present Status with the rate you programmed for that segment. This is another reason you should always keep a written record of your firing programs. (Pre-18D software versions show the programmed rate in Present Status rather than the actual rate. See page 25, SOFT option, to look up the software version.)

**HTdE** / High Temperature Deviation

Causes:
- During a heating-up ramp or a hold, the temperature is 100°F / 56°C above the programmed temperature.
- During a cooling-down segment, the temperature is 100°F / 56°C above the segment’s starting temperature.
- A fast rate caused the controller to overshoot the target temperature.
- A relay is stuck in the closed position sending power to the elements.

See “Power Failures,” next page.

**Note:** You can disable the HTdE alarm for a segment by programming a FULL rate (9999°). HTdE will continue to operate during the hold and in all other segments that have slower rates.

**LId** / Missing Connector Pin

On the back of the Sentry circuit board, at the top right side, is a small two-pin terminal. If the connector on that terminal is missing, **LId** will appear in the display during firing. The elements will not turn on. (If the two-pin connector is missing, you can buy another from a computer supply store.)

**PF1** / Power Failure

The power failed during a controlled cooling segment. The kiln temperature was below the last active cooling segment temperature when the power came back on. The kiln will not resume firing. See “Power Failures,” next page.

**PF 2** / Power Failure

The power failed. The kiln temperature was below 212°F / 100°C when the power came back on. The kiln will not resume firing. See “Power Failures,” next page.

**PF 3** / Power Failure

The power failed. The temperature dropped 72°F / 40°C while the power was off. The kiln will not resume firing. See “Power Failures,” next page.

**TC 2** / Thermocouple Failure

The thermocouple of a single-zone kiln failed while the controller was at **TcLE**.
TCdE / Uneven Multiple-Zone Temperatures
The zones of a multiple-zone kiln are firing unevenly. Causes:
- A burned out element or relay
- The thermocouples and elements are improperly wired. A thermocouple is turning on the elements to the wrong zone. For instance, if the top thermocouple turns on the bottom elements, the kiln will fire out of balance. When zones are out of balance by 180°F / 100°C, TCdE will appear in the display.

Visually compare the wiring of the thermocouples, relays and elements in your kiln to the kiln’s wiring diagram. Also, use the Element Test option shown on page 25.

TCL / Thermocouple Lag
The heating rate is slower than 9°F / 5°C per hour and the kiln temperature is more than 100°F / 56°C away from the programmed temperature. The TCL becomes inactive above 500°F/260°C.
Causes:
- On kilns that use a portable controller, the thermocouple fell out of the firing chamber.
- A bare spot on the thermocouple lead wires has touched a grounded object inside the kiln switch box causing the thermocouple to short out.
- TCL will flash if you program a cooling segment temperature that is below room temperature. When TCL appears, press STOP.
- Check for worn or burned out elements, defective relays, low voltage and defective thermocouple.

Note: The TCL alarm is available only on software version 18D or later. You can check the software version of your controller by using the SOFT Option. See page 25.

TCR / Thermocouple Leads Reversed
Check that the thermocouple lead wires are connected to the correct terminals. See your wiring diagram.

Power Failures
The Sentry handles a power failure in two ways:
1. After a brief power failure, the controller continues firing as before. It shows a normal temperature display alternating with PF. The kiln will remain turned off after a power failure under these conditions:
   - The kiln will remain off if the temperature is below 212°F / 100°C when the power comes back on.
   - The kiln will remain off if the temperature dropped 72°F / 40°C or more.

2. After an extended power failure, PF 1 or PF 2 will appear. The kiln will NOT resume firing. When the Sentry aborts a firing after a power failure, the display will show the following:
   - PF 1 or PF 2
   - Total firing time before power failed
   - Temperature at the time of power failure
   - Current kiln temperature

To resume firing, press ENTER. The kiln will begin firing again from its present temperature. For example, the kiln reached 1000°F / 538°C when power failed. The temperature is 800°F / 426°C when you turn the kiln back on. Firing will resume from 800°F / 426°C. You need not cool the kiln to room temperature before starting a ceramic firing over unless you decide to use new witness cones.

When you resume firing by pressing ENTER, the controller begins firing in the first segment that has a higher target temperature than the current kiln temperature. However, if the power failed during a ramping down (cooling) segment, the controller will resume firing from the same cooling segment.

Using Ceramic Shelf Cones After an Extended Power Failure
- Fire the ware again. It is okay to use the same partially fired witness cones, even if they cooled back down to room temperature. So long as the cones did not heat to within 100°F/56°C of maturity, they can be used again.
- Fire the ware again. If the kiln shuts off within 100°F / 55°C of maturity, and the temperature drops 50°F / 28°C or more after the kiln shuts off, do not depend on the witness cones. Once they cool 50°F / 28°C after they have been heated to within 100°F / 55°C of maturity, they will not bend properly. This is because they form a hard shell.


**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Does the increase in Ramp-Hold temperature assume a one hour time period?**

Yes. When you program the rate, you are telling the controller how much the temperature needs to go up or down per hour. A car’s speedometer measures speed in miles or kilometers per hour. To understand temperature rate, think of a speedometer that measures temperature change per hour instead of miles. This applies to both heating and cooling rate. At a rate of 100 degrees per hour, the kiln would take 10 hours to reach 1000 degrees.

It may be easier to understand the controller by drawing your program on graph paper. Show slanted lines for rates and horizontal lines for temperature holds.

**When a digital kiln is taking longer than usual to complete a firing, how do you know whether something has gone wrong and the kiln is over-firing?**

You should place pyrometric witness cones on the shelf so that you can see them through a peephole (page 10).

Another way to prevent an over-fire is to learn to estimate kiln temperature by the color of light showing around the lid and peepholes. That way, you can tell at a glance if all is well with your kiln. You could also use a pyrometer as a temperature reference.

**Does the room temperature affect the accuracy of a digital controller? (For instance, does the controller’s temperature change from summer to winter in an unheated building?)**

The Sentry controllers compensate for room temperature as long as you stay within the range of 32°F – 158°F (0°C - 70°C). For instance, if your unheated room is 32°F / 0°C in the winter and 100°F / 38°C in the summer, the room temperature should have no effect on the way the controller reads the kiln’s firing chamber.

**I fire ceramics. When would I ever need to use Ramp-Hold mode instead of Cone-Fire?**

Most people use Cone-Fire mode to fire ceramics. It is simple—just enter speed, cone, and hold time. Ramp-Hold mode, by comparison, seems complicated. Ramp-Hold divides the firing into segments, each with a rate, target temperature, and hold time.

But some people fire all their ceramics with Ramp-Hold instead of Cone-Fire. Their reasons:

1) If the witness cone doesn’t bend to maturity (page 20) in Cone-Fire, you can adjust the shut-off point in the next firing by adding hold time or using the Cone Offset option (page 20).

To adjust a Ramp-Hold firing to make the witness cone bend to maturity, just alter the target temperature of the segment that fires the cone to maturity. That is simpler than correcting a Cone-Fire firing.

For example, the witness cone on the shelf needs to bend just a little farther. Merely add 10 degrees of temperature rise to the next Ramp-Hold firing. Instead of programming a target temperature of 2232°F for cone 6, program 2242°F. If the witness cone is bent slightly too far, you can easily back off 5 or 10 degrees the next time.

2) The Sentry includes candling and slow-cool in Cone-Fire mode. Candling helps dry the greenware; slow-cool gives certain glazes extra time for full development. In Ramp-Hold, you can program candling, slow-cooling, and other features merely by adding more segments.

3) You learn more about firing when you program each step yourself.

4) You can experiment in Ramp-Hold more than you can in Cone-Fire. Ramp-Hold simplifies the firing of difficult glazes such as crystalline. If a friend or teacher gives you the firing schedule for a glaze, you can modify it easily in Ramp-Hold to obtain the best results for your kiln and materials.

**Why does my controller begin the next segment even though the display is still a few degrees away from the correct temperature? For instance, the next segment starts at 1448 instead of the programmed temperature of 1450?**

What you are describing is normal for a digital controller. There is a delay of several seconds between the actual kiln temperature and the temperature shown in the controller’s display window.

Since the kiln reached the temperature that you programmed, the controller began the next segment even though the display window still showed a lower temperature. The controller didn’t wait for the temperature in the display window to catch up with the kiln’s actual temperature.

**I programmed a FULL rate, yet my kiln heated at only 550 degrees F per hour.**

The controller is limited by the heating capacity of each kiln. So, the maximum rate varies depending on type of kiln, density of load, etc.

**The alarm on my Sentry sounds a minute into each firing. Why is the alarm going off?**

The alarm was set to a temperature below the current temperature. To deactivate the alarm for your next firing, set it to 0.

**Firing to cone 04 at Fast speed in Cone-Fire mode takes 7 ½ hours. Is there a way to speed up the firing for my thin, slip-cast ware?**

After you program the firing, use the SPd option to make the kiln fire faster (page 19). You can shorten a 7 ½ hour firing to 5 ½ hours.

To fire even faster, use Ramp-Hold mode to program faster rates in the cone 04 firing schedule (pages 32 - 33).
## Appendix A: Display Messages

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Page Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Abort</strong></td>
<td>Emergency stop was pressed. The firing was stopped.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alarm</strong></td>
<td>ALAR appears either when you are entering an alarm temperature or when the alarm is sounding during a firing. To stop an alarm, press any key except STOP. If the alarm goes off when you first begin firing, it is because it was set for a lower temperature than the present temperature.</td>
<td>8, 11, 15, 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auxiliary Output</strong></td>
<td>The AOP option is for kilns equipped with a special-order kiln switch box receptacle called the Auxiliary Output.</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bad Programming</strong></td>
<td>This message appears when a Ramp-Hold firing has been programmed with 0 rate in the first segment or when all target temperatures are lower than the current kiln temperature.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Configuration Code</strong></td>
<td>This is an option that shows the factory configuration code for your Sentry. This is for technicians who call the factory for support.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change °F / °C</strong></td>
<td>Choose between operation in degrees F or degrees C.</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cone-Fire</strong></td>
<td>The Sentry is ready for you to enter a cone number.</td>
<td>6, 8, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooling</strong></td>
<td>In Cone-Fire programming, Slow Cooling is shown as COOL. To program a slow cooling, enter the cooling rate in degrees per hour. Leave the setting at 0 if you do not want a slow cooling.</td>
<td>11, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electrical Rate</strong></td>
<td>Enter the electric rate shown on your electric bill. Example: 10.25 cents per KWh is entered as 10.25.</td>
<td>8, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Completed Firing</strong></td>
<td>This means the firing completed normally as programmed. These three messages will also cycle one after the other: firing time in hours and minutes, the temperature of the last segment, and the current kiln temperature.</td>
<td>5, 11, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delay</strong></td>
<td>DELA is a timer that starts the kiln later. Delay time appears in hours and minutes.</td>
<td>7, 11, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Temperature</strong></td>
<td>This prompt, which appears in Ramp-Hold programming, is asking for this target temperature. The number is the segment of the program.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temperature Difference</strong></td>
<td>This option shows the maximum temperature spread between zones in a multiple zone kiln.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electronics Temperature</strong></td>
<td>The Sentry circuit board is rated for operation at temperatures up to 176°F / 80°C. When the circuit board gets hotter, the Sentry shuts off. The ELEC option shows you the temperature of the circuit board.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electronics Too Hot</strong></td>
<td>The Sentry circuit board is too hot, so the kiln shut off.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fast Speed</strong></td>
<td>In Cone-Fire programming, Fast Speed shows in Program Review as F 20. This is also how Fast Speed is listed in the SPd Speed option.</td>
<td>7, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thermocouple Failed</strong></td>
<td>The thermocouple failed. This can be due to a broken thermocouple, loose thermocouple connection on the back of the Sentry, disconnected thermocouple wire, or a defective controller.</td>
<td>18, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vent Fan</strong></td>
<td>The Fan option, accessed through the OPTIONS key, is for kilns equipped with a special-order kiln switch box receptacle called the Auxiliary Output.</td>
<td>13, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fast Speed</strong></td>
<td>In Cone-Fire programming, if you press ENTER when FAST appears, the kiln will program to fire at fast speed.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fan</strong></td>
<td>If your kiln has the optional AOP outlet (for a kiln vent), the FN prompt will appear for each segment during Ramp-Hold programming. It is asking if you want the vent on or off for that segment.</td>
<td>15, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Failed to Cool</strong></td>
<td>This error message means the kiln cannot cool as fast as the cooling that you programmed.</td>
<td>24, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Failed to Heat</strong></td>
<td>The kiln cannot heat as fast as you programmed.</td>
<td>24, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Firing Too Long</strong></td>
<td>The temperature rise is less than 27°F / 15°C per hour and the firing time is two hours longer than the current segment was programmed.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Speed</strong></td>
<td>The rate, or temperature change per hour, is maximum.</td>
<td>15, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temperature Hold</strong></td>
<td>When this message appears during Ramp-Hold programming, it is asking you if you want to hold, or maintain, the target temperature of that segment. If so, enter the length of hold time in hours and minutes (e.g., 1 hour 20 minutes = 01.20). The number after Hd is the segment number. Each segment in a Ramp-Hold firing is numbered.</td>
<td>15, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temperature Hold</strong></td>
<td>When this message appears during Cone-Fire programming, it is asking you if you want to hold, or maintain, the cone temperature at the end of the firing. If so, enter the length of hold time in hours and minutes (e.g., 1 hour 20 minutes = 01.20). When HOLd appears in program review, it is showing how much hold time has been entered.</td>
<td>11, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Temperature Deviation</strong></td>
<td>During a heating-up ramp or a hold, the temperature is 100°F / 56°C above the programmed temperature.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer ID</strong></td>
<td>The ID option is for connecting the Sentry to a personal computer.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ready to Begin</strong></td>
<td>The Sentry must display the IdLE message before you can begin firing or programming.</td>
<td>11, 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the SPd option, accessed through the option key,
Message Definition Page Reference
KW Kilowatts 8, 23
The controller can figure the cost to fire your kiln if you supply your kiln’s wattage. (See the data plate on the switch box.) Divide wattage by 1000 to get kilowatts. Enter that amount: 10,800 watts ÷ 1000 = 10.8.

Lid Missing Pin 27
When Lid appears, a two-pin connector on the back of the board is missing.

LOCK Program Lock 24
With this option activated, a stored program cannot be altered or removed from memory.

LTdE Low Temperature Deviation 24, 26
This message appears when the kiln is below the Temperature Deviation setting in the TEdE option.

OFST Cone Offset 20
Adjust a Cone-Fire program to bend the matching witness cone on the kiln shelf.

PF 1 Power Failure 27, 28
The power failed during a controlled cooling segment. The kiln temperature was below the last active cooling segment temperature when the power came back on.

PF 2 Power Failure 27, 28
The power failed. When power came back on, the temperature was below 212°F / 100°C.

PF 3 Power Failure 27, 28
The power failed and the temperature dropped 72°F/ 40°C.

PF Power Failure 26
There was a power failure during firing. The kiln continued firing after the power came back on.

PRHT Pre-Heat 10, 11, 12
In a Cone-Fire program, Pre-Heat heats the ware slowly to 200°F / 93°C for the length of time you specify. Pre-Heat is designed to remove moisture safely from greenware.

RA 1 Rate 15
RA 1, RA 2, RA 3, etc., appear in Ramp-Hold programming, Program Review, and Present Status. When RA 1, 2, 3, etc. appear during programming, the controller is asking you for firing rate for each segment. Rate means how fast the firing progresses, in degrees of temperature per hour. Every segment must have a firing rate. The number after RA is the segment number. Each segment in a Ramp-Hold firing is numbered. Program Review shows firing rate after RA 1, 2, 3, etc. In Present Status, RA 1, 2, 3, etc. means the segment that the firing is in at that moment.

RST Reset 25
The RST option erases cone and thermocouple offsets, selects “F operation, erases stored programs in Ramp-Hold, and selects Type-S thermocouple. Note that if you use Reset, and your kiln is equipped with a Type-K thermocouple, you must use the TC option to select Type-K. (Reset selects Type-S as a safety precaution. If you had a Type-S thermocouple and Reset selected Type-K, your kiln would overfire. On the other hand, if you had a Type-K thermocouple, Type-S selected would underfire your kiln, which is better than overfiring it. The K-Type thermocouple is standard on most kilns.)

S 20 Slow Speed 7, 19
Cone-Fire slow speed shows in Program Review as S 20. This is also how slow speed is listed in the SPd Speed option.

SFTY Safety 24
This is the maximum temperature the Sentry is programmed for your kiln. It can be altered only at the factory.

Message Definition Page Reference
SKIP Skip Segment 8, 12
If you press the Skip Segment key during a firing, SKIP will appear. If you press the key again, the firing will skip to the next segment. In Cone-Fire, Skip Segment takes you only out of Pre-Heat or Hold.

SLOW Slow Speed 11
In Cone-Fire programming, if you press ENTER when SLOW appears, the kiln will program to fire at slow speed.

SOFT Software Version 25
This option gives the version of software loaded into your Sentry.

SPd Speed 11, 19
The SPd message appears during Cone-Fire programming and in Options. 1) In the SPd option, accessed through the option key, change the speed of a Cone-Fire program beyond the standard fast, medium or slow. 2) While programming a firing for Cone-Fire, choose slow, medium or fast speed at the SPd prompt.

STd Standard Speed 11
Cone-Fire medium speed appears in the Sentry as Std, or Standard. This is because medium speed is the standard firing program used in Cone-Fire. Fast and Slow speeds alter the standard firing program.

STRF Firing Started 11, 15
This appears when firing begins. Do not be concerned if it takes a moment for the relays to turn on. The Sentry is processing data.

T123 Zone Temperatures 25
This option shows temperatures in each zone.

TC Thermocouple Type 22, 26, 27
Choose between types K, S, or R thermocouple. It is important to select the correct type, or the controller will not read temperature accurately.

TcdE Uneven Temperature 27, 28
This is an error message for multiple-zone kilns. It means the temperatures of the zones are out of balance by 180°F / 100°C. This is usually caused by a miswired kiln or by a defective relay.

TCL Thermocouple Lag 28
The heating rate is slower than 9°F / 5°C per hour and the kiln temperature is more than 100°F / 56°C away from the programmed temperature.

TCO Thermocouple Offset 21
Adjust the controller’s temperature to compensate for temperature drift, or aging, of a thermocouple.

TCR Thermocouple Reversed 28
The thermocouple wires are reversed.

TEdE Temperature Deviation 24
The Sentry includes error messages to warn you that the kiln is not maintaining the programmed temperature. The sensitivity of the error messages is based on a temperature entered in the TEdE option.

TEST Element Test 25
This option is for testing the elements and thermocouples. If you test a thermocouple with a lighter, the temperature display responds faster during Test than during Idle display.

USER User Program 14
In Ramp-Hold programming, the USER prompt is asking you where you want to place the program in memory. The Sentry has 9 spaces in memory. Keep a written record of the programs 1 - 9 in memory.
### Low Fire Cones °F

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cone</th>
<th>Segment 1</th>
<th>Segment 2</th>
<th>Segment 3</th>
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### High Fire Cones °F

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</tbody>
</table>

These are the firing schedules programmed in Cone-Fire mode. To customize a schedule, write down your changes. Then load your new schedule into Ramp-Hold.
Appendix B: Preset Standard Cone-Fire Schedules - °C

These are the firing schedules programmed in Cone-Fire mode. To customize a schedule, write down your changes. Then load your new schedule into Ramp-Hold.

### Low Fire Cones °C

<table>
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### Medium Fire Cones °C

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<th>Cone</th>
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### High Fire Cones °C

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<th>Cone</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Upgrading Instructions

Upgrading the DTC 100, 600, 800 & 1000 Series to the Sentry

1. Unplug the kiln or disconnect the power. Remove the 4 screws holding the controller faceplate to the switch box. Gently remove the old controller.

2. Disconnect the wires from the old controller.

3. If your kiln is top-loading and originally came with a DTC 100 or 600, the heat shield inside the switch box may need to be moved to give more clearance for the new Sentry controller. Measure the space between the heat shield and the front of the box. If the space is less than 1 ¼”, remove the screws that hold the bottom of the heat shield. These screws are on the sides near the louvers. Drill new holes in the switch box next to the bottom 2 holes used for the heat shield. Move the bottom of the heat shield back and fasten screws in the new holes.

4. Thread the Sentry wiring harness into the switch box by inserting it in the opening where the controller goes. Let the end with the plugs hang out of the box.

5. Remove the switch box from the kiln by removing the screws holding the box to the kiln.

6. The red wire from the old controller connects to the relay(s). The red wire in the Sentry wiring harness goes to the same relay terminal. (See diagram, facing page.) You will notice that the red Sentry wire has 3 push-on connectors with jumper wires. If your kiln has 3 relays, you will use all 3 push-on connectors, 1 for each relay. If you have 2 relays, cut off the last terminal and jumper wire. If your kiln has 1 relay, cut off two push-on connectors. Cut the wire close to the terminal that remains (see next photo).

7. Attach the red wire terminal(s) to the relay(s). Follow steps 6 and 7 for the black wire, which also goes to the relays.

8. Note how the white, orange, and blue wires of the old controller are connected to the transformer. Removing and replacing one wire at a time, connect the Sentry white, orange, and blue wires to the transformer the same way. (See Transformers, next page. Cut off the extra blue wire terminal if your transformer doesn’t need it.)

9. Remove the old wiring harness from the switch box. With the thermocouple wires and the Sentry connection plugs hanging out of the front of the switch box, move the box into place on the kiln. Arrange the wires so that when the switch box is fastened to the kiln, the wires and wire nuts will not touch an element connector or the kiln case. Install the screws that hold the switch box to the kiln.

10. Straighten the ends of the thermocouple wires. Attach them to the thermocouple terminals on the bottom of the Sentry. (Use the center connectors if your kiln has only one thermocouple.) Make sure the thermocouple wires are tight and that there is no short.

11. Attach the two plugs to the back of the Sentry controller. Carefully insert the Sentry into the controller opening on the switch box. Install the 4 corner screws.

---

The extra wires tied to the harness are for multiple zone kilns and the optional AOP electrical outlet. The green grounding wire is connected only if you use a computer interface.

Lever type connectors: if the wire is too thick, it will break the lever. Do not force the lever downward.

The button-type thermocouple connector: press down, then insert wires.

Inserting the plugs on the back of the Sentry.
How to Wire the Sentry

**Transformer**
Reduces power to 24 volts AC, which operates the controller.

**Fuse**
Located in the switch box, AGC ½ amp, 250 v. AC.

**Thermocouple**
Two wires of dissimilar metal join together in the thermocouple tip. When heated, the wires produce a small voltage, which the controller interprets as a temperature.

**Relay**
Kilns with one thermocouple: use center terminals. Observe color coding.

**Heating Element**
Power flows to the elements when the relay turns on.

**Wiring Single & Multiple Relays**
Kiln with 1 relay: Kiln with 2 relays: cut here

A digital kiln or furnace uses only six basic parts to control heat. Understanding how they work simplifies trouble-shooting.

1. **Fuse** Helps protect the controller from power surges.
2. **Transformer** Reduces the power to 24 volts AC, which operates the controller.
3. **Digital controller** Controls temperature and rate.
4. **Thermocouples** Senses temperature. The tip protrudes into the firing chamber.
5. **Relay** Turns the heating elements on and off. Receives a signal from the controller.
6. **Heating elements**

Upgrading from the DTC-Series Controllers

**DTC 1000 & 800C**
Auxiliary Output
Output (Yellow zone only)
Output Red
Input Red
Auxiliary Input
Center Tap Blue & Black
Input Orange
(Thermocouple: Red, Yellow, Black, Orange, White, Blue)

**DTC 800 & 800C**
Auxiliary Output
Output Red & Green
Input White
Center Tap Blue & Black
Input Orange
(Thermocouple: Red, Green, Yellow, Black, Orange, Blue)

**DTC 100 & 600C**
Thermocouple Red - Thermocouple Yellow & Green
Output Red
Input Red
Output Green
Input Green
Center Tap Blue & Black
Input Orange
(Thermocouple: Red, Green, Yellow, Blue, Black, Orange)
## Appendix D: Temperature Equivalents For Orton Self-Supporting Pyrometric Cones

### °F

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</table>

*Rate of temperature increase during last 90 - 120 minutes of firing. Tables by courtesy of the Edward Orton, Jr. Ceramic Foundation.

### °C

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<th>Cone Number</th>
<th>Self-Supporting Cones Heated at: 15° C</th>
<th>60° C Per Hour*</th>
<th>150° C Per Hour*</th>
<th>Pre-Fire Color</th>
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<tbody>
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*Rate of temperature increase during last 90 - 120 minutes of firing. Tables by courtesy of the Edward Orton, Jr. Ceramic Foundation.
### Appendix E: User Program Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User Program 1</th>
<th>Rate °/Hour</th>
<th>Target Temperature</th>
<th>Hold Time Hours.Mins</th>
<th>Optional Fan On / Off</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Hd1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Hd3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<th>Optional Fan On / Off</th>
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<th>Target Temperature</th>
<th>Hold Time Hours.Mins</th>
<th>Optional Fan On / Off</th>
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## Sentry Ramp-Hold Shorthand Instructions

After you press the keys in the left column, the message to the right will appear. (See also page 15.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEYS TO PRESS</th>
<th>DISPLAY</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROGRAM AND FIRE THE KILN.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply power to kiln</td>
<td>IdLE</td>
<td>Press Enter if IdLE does not appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>USER</td>
<td>Enter program number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A number from 1 to 9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Program number appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td>RA 1</td>
<td>Enter rate of segment 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>0200</td>
<td>Rate appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td>°F 1</td>
<td>Enter temperature of segment 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Temperature appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td>Hd 1</td>
<td>Next, enter hold time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold time (0 if none)</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>Hold time appears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Repeat for other segments. Enter rate of 0 for 1st segment not needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEYS TO PRESS</th>
<th>DISPLAY</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td>IdLE</td>
<td>The kiln is ready to fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td>STRT</td>
<td>Kiln is now firing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SELECT AND FIRE A STORED USER PROGRAM.

Apply power to kiln | IdLE | Press Enter if IdLE does not appear. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>USER</td>
<td>Select a program number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A number from 1 to 9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Displays the number you selected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td>RA 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOP, STOP</td>
<td>IdLE</td>
<td>Selected program is ready to fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td>STRT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kiln is now firing. (Use Program Review by pressing 6.)
## Sentry Cone-Fire Shorthand Programming

After you press the key(s) in the left column, the message to the right will appear. Press 1 from **IdLE**. If the 1 key does not respond, your controller does not have Cone-Fire. (See also page 11.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEYS TO PRESS</th>
<th>DISPLAY</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply power to kiln</td>
<td><strong>IdLE</strong></td>
<td>Press Enter if IdLE doesn’t appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>CONE</strong></td>
<td>Enter the cone number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cone # (i.e. 05)</td>
<td>05</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td><strong>SPd</strong></td>
<td>Enter the firing speed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Fast), 2 (Med.), or 3 (Slow)</td>
<td><strong>FAST</strong></td>
<td>The firing speed appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td><strong>PRHT</strong></td>
<td>Enter Pre-heat time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Heat time (0 if none)</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>Pre-heat time appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td><strong>HOLD</strong></td>
<td>Enter hold time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold time (0 if none)</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>Hold time appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td><strong>COOL</strong></td>
<td>Enter slow cooling rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow cooling rate (0 if none)</td>
<td>0000</td>
<td>Shows degrees per hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td><strong>IdLE</strong></td>
<td>Kiln is ready to fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTER</td>
<td><strong>STRT</strong></td>
<td>Kiln is now firing. Press 6 for Program Review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Kiln is now firing to the cone you selected.