



Turner's Tip: Refrigerator Drying.

On our Website, under "Tips" and "To Microwave Your Turnings", an interesting drying method used by an Australian turner appeared from respondent Jim Gott (Jgtimp@aol.com). The small live oak bowl at left was dried by that method, and came out successfully, despite the fact that the center of the log is included in the bowl. Oak is especially prone to cracking.

The method is as follows: Turn the green wood piece to finished dimensions, and apply a coat of finish. Leave the base with the chuck hold portion on. Place the piece in a plastic bag and freeze, at least overnight, in the freezer compartment of your refrigerator. Remove the piece from the freezer, take off the bag and let it to dry in the refrigerator compartment for two weeks. The refrigerator atmosphere is at a very low relative humidity, promoting moisture removal from the piece.

Remove, and allow it to return to room temperature. Remount, continue finish sanding, apply final finish, and part off from the chuck. Sand and finish bottom. It is possible that this works because the ice crystals formed in freezing may break through the cell walls of the wood, changing the structure so that it is less likely to crack.

If you give this a try, let us know your experiences; we'll pass them on. (syandvera@earthlink.net; sspduncan@comcast.net)