

TOWN OF BARNSTABLE GREEN BURIAL REGULATIONS

These Green Burial regulations shall apply to one of the cemeteries in the Town of Barnstable, Mosswood Cemetery. Mosswood Cemetery has an exclusive section for Green Burials only. Its practices and policies conform to the guidelines set forth by the Green Burial Council, which regulates Green Burial Standards for Natural Cemeteries in the United States. All current Town of Barnstable Ordinances, rules and regulation apply, in addition to the following for Green burial regulations.

Burial Containers

Town of Barnstable requires the use of ridged caskets made of wood or wicker for all natural burials. Wooden caskets must be free of toxic materials; they should be held together with wooden dowels and non-toxic glues. Caskets made of wicker, bamboo and other natural materials must be free of toxic paints and varnishes. Handmade caskets should have similar dimensions as those of a standard size casket, approximately 24 to 28 inches in width and 79 to 84 inches in length. If an oversized casket is required, please notify the Cemetery Office to ensure that the grave can be expanded to the casket's dimensions. The structural integrity of the casket must provide for appropriate handling of the body throughout the burial process. Shrouded bodies are permitted, but must be enclosed in a biodegradable casket.

Scheduling the Burial

Cemetery staff will assist with the scheduling of the burial. In general, funerals must be scheduled 48 hours in advance, where possible, by contacting the cemetery office.

Transporting the Body

Town of Barnstable Cemetery requires that the deceased be transported by a licensed funeral director and proper transportation papers must accompany the deceased; if not, the service will be postponed. Mosswood Cemetery staff will lead the procession from entrance to the grave site.

Moving the Body to the Grave

Pall bearers, typically family, friends and funeral home personnel, will transfer the casket from the vehicle to a funeral wagon (family and friends may escort the body alongside the wagon as it rolls) or may carry the casket to the lowering device. Mosswood staff will assist in the transfer of the body to the lowering device which has been placed over the open grave. For safety, Cemetery staff will operate the lowering device at the grave. This device ensures a gentle lowering into the grave. It is a quiet, mechanical device that lowers a body using canvas straps.

If requested, Mosswood will provide soil and shovels for families to symbolically participate in the burial of the casket. Cemetery staff will complete the closing of the grave using mechanical equipment after the family departs.

Flowers

Families may place fresh flowers in the grave after the body has been lowered. Funeral floral arrangements shall be removed by Cemetery staff seven (7) days following their placement. Lot owners wishing to keep any part or all of the floral arrangement should retrieve them within the seven-day period. Flowers in artificial containers, as well as artificial floral pieces of any type are prohibited.

Memorialization

A natural stone marker no larger than 12 inches by 12 inches engraved with the name of the deceased, birth date and death date may be placed at the foot end of the grave flush with the ground.

Rules and Regulations

Green burials shall be located in designated sections of the Cemetery.

Green Burials are to be coordinated through a licensed funeral home, and the deceased shall be transported to the cemetery by a licensed funeral director. The deceased shall be kept cool until burial by a licensed funeral director until the time of burial.

Caskets are required and must be made from naturally biodegradable materials that have been previously approved by the Green Burial Council.

Hardwood caskets, metal caskets, or caskets that have been stained or finished are prohibited.

Concrete burial vaults and grave liners are prohibited.

A burial shroud may be used providing it has been made of naturally biodegradable materials and is in a casket.

Non-organic materials, such as metal, plastic, concrete, or synthetic materials are not permitted to be buried. The Cemetery may, at its discretion, allow personal jewelry.

Toxic chemicals such as formaldehyde are not allowed.

Embalmed bodies must use a non-toxic Green Burial Council approved fluid.

There shall be adequate separation of the green burial site and any private wells, as well as adequate vertical separation of the remains/green burial site from groundwater, which shall be a minimum of five feet of separation above the maximum adjusted groundwater table.

There shall be adequate separation of a green burial site from any areas of steep sloping ground in order to reduce the possibility of breakout.

The Cemetery reserves the right to refuse for burial a body that is not properly prepared.

All necessary interment forms are to be signed by the next of kin or an authorized agent prior to any interment.

The cemetery relies on the next of kin or an authorized agent to identify the remains of the deceased.

A minimum of 48-hour notice, where possible, is preferred for preparing a grave for interment.

Next of kin or an authorized agent may request interment.

Plastic flowers arrangements, vases, photographs, manmade or manufactured items may not be left on the gravesite.

Natural and/or biodegradable items may be placed on the grave.

The Cemetery reserves the right to remove items as they become unsightly and/or prohibited by the Green Burial Standards.

Fees

Current cemetery fees will apply to all burials, with no additional fees for green burials. Please refer to the Cemetery Fee Schedule located on the Town of Barnstable website at www.townofbarnstable.us/Departments/cemeteries or contact the Cemetery Division at 508.428.8643