

Frequently Asked Questions About Green Burials

Prepared by [Glenwood Cemetery](#)

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF GREEN BURIAL

- #1. No Embalming: Decomposition is nature's way of recycling a body.
- #2. Direct Earth Burial: For green burial, no outside grave liner or protective vault is used. The shrouded and/or casketed body is buried directly into the ground.
- #3. Ecological Restoration & Conservation: Site preservation and perpetual protection is a key component of this principle of green burial.
- #4. Communal memorialization: Ultimately, it is the green burial site as a whole that becomes a living memorial to the person interred there.
- #5. Optimized Land use: a well-planned green burial cemetery (or cemetery section) will optimize the land it occupies.

- 1. What is a green Burial?** Green Burial is a statement of personal values for those who seek to minimize their impact on the local and global environment. For people who are mindful of the cyclical nature of life, green burial is a spiritually fulfilling alternative to conventional burial or cremation. It is an environmentally sensitive practice: the body is returned to the earth to decompose naturally and contribute to new life.
- 2. How deep will they be buried?** This is regulated in the FBCSA Funeral Burial Cremation Services Act, a full body burial, casket or shroud has to be covered with 2 feet of soil. The overall depth will be 3.5 – 4 feet.
- 3. What kind of casket can be used?** The casket has to be made of sustainable and fully biodegradable materials. This can be a simple wooden pine or poplar box, woven willow, bamboo or wicker container.
- 4. Can we use a shroud?** Yes, a shroud can be used made of unbleached cotton fabric, linen, silk, wool or bamboo. The shrouded body needs to have a backing board of some sort to be able to carry and lower the body into the grave. The backing board should also be made of biodegradable material if it is remaining with the body
- 5. Can we bury cremated remains in a green burial site?** At Glenwood we allow 3 additional cremated remains on full body burial, or one grave can hold 4 cremated remains. The container or urn must be made of biodegradable materials (unpainted unvarnished wood, cardboard, bamboo).
- 6. Can a Headstone or flat marker be placed on a green burial site?** No, there are no individual memorials allowed on the graves but a central feature like a boulder is/will be installed for memorialization. Bronze plaques in the shape of a butterfly can be purchased with the deceased name and dates.

- 7. Can you bury in winter?** We are unable to bury through the winter months because of the steep grounds. We are concerned with safety first, but we perform burials until we get covered by a load of snow. In these cases, the deceased can be stored on site in our Cemetery Receiving Vault and the burial has to be postponed until spring. Only in these cases an enviro-friendly embalming (Formaldehyde-free fluid) is allowed.
- 8. Can we plant flowers or shrubs?** You are allowed to plant a shrub, tree or perennial as long as it is not artificial.
- 9. How much will a grave cost and can we prepay?** A grave in the Natural Green Burial Section costs the same as other full burial graves. Purchase price is \$1200 and HST is not applicable. You can buy a grave in advance and choose the location. Burial fees can be also be pre-paid. This fee is deposited into a Trust Fund and is guaranteed.
- 10. Who transfers the body to the cemetery?** This can be done by a funeral home, transfer service or family members as long as the required legal paperwork is done. Keep in mind that pallbearers are still needed to carry the body into the hearse or van.
- 11. How does the body get from the hearse to the grave?** You need 6 people to carry the body into and out of the hearse. They can be family members acting as pall bearers, or the funeral home can provide staff.
- 12. How is the body lowered into the grave?** Ropes or straps can be used if family members are wanting and able to do this. Otherwise a lowering device will be used.
- 13. What about medical implants? Do they have to be removed?** If you are going to be cremated and have a pacemaker it must be removed. Green burial should not subject the body to alterations after death.



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CEMETERY

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