

Natural Burials in Central Coast

The Council allows natural burials at the Central Coast Memorial Park Cemetery.

A 'natural' or 'green' burial is an approach which aims to help 'return the body to the earth' in the most natural way, while maintaining respect for mourning through safe rituals that have meaning for the living, the dead, and the environment.

Characteristics of a 'natural' or 'green' burial typically include preparing the body without chemical preservatives or disinfectants; dressing the body in biodegradable clothing; and burying the body in biodegradable container, casket, shroud or urn, without a grave liner or burial vault.

Any request for a natural burial will need to comply with the following conditions:

- 1 single depth burial only;
- 2 companion burial by subsequent opening of a grave is not permitted (no double depth graves);
- 3 handling and transport of human remains to and within the cemetery, and until immediately prior to burial must be in an impervious conventional coffin to prevent discharge of body fluids, contaminants or infectious material, and otherwise without risk of harm to public health and safety;
- 4 if a coffin used for the storage and transport of human remains is to be re-used, it must first be steam cleaned and disinfected;
- 5 remains must not be embalmed, and any preparation of the remains must involve the use of biodegradable products;
- 6 remains may be buried in a biodegradable container of any material or form, provided such container will fit within a standard grave opening;
- 7 if the remains are not placed in a container, they must be wrapped in not less than four (4) layers of a cotton or linen sheeting sufficient to prevent the leakage of body fluids;
- 8 an identification nameplate must be fixed to the lid of the coffin or container used to store, transport and handle the remains prior to burial; the identification nameplate must be –
 - a. removed and fixed to the lid of any biodegradable coffin; or
 - b. placed on top of the wrapping material;
- 9 the grave plot may be marked by an approved plaque supplied by the family;
- 10 Council does not permit other persons to dig or backfill a grave and therefore normal cemetery fees and charges apply to a natural burial.

In introducing this option for the conduct of burials, it needs to be noted that Council does not generally accept reservations at the Cemetery.

Anyone interested in a 'natural burial' are encouraged to speak with a funeral director or alternatively contact the Council's Cemetery Manager at the Administration Centre, 19 King Edward Street, Ulverstone.