
Cemetery Operations Policy

Adopted: March 24, 2015

Revised: _____

I. PURPOSE

West Chester Township finds it necessary to establish policies and procedures for the operation of Township property, designated as places of burial.

II. SCOPE

- A. The maintenance of roads, buildings and all other physical properties of the cemetery are under exclusive jurisdiction of the West Chester Township Board of Trustees, Butler County, Ohio.
- B. These policies and procedures refer to all cemeteries in the Township. The Township has ownership of one (1) active cemetery and two (2) inactive cemeteries.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. For the purpose of purchasing graves, the Township has established the following definitions for “resident” and “non-resident”:
 - 1. Resident is defined as a person with a current mailing address in West Chester Township at the time of purchase. This includes both homeowners and renters. A business owner is not a resident unless legally living at their place of business. The resident four grave limit is per household or family, not four to each adult member residing at the residence.
 - 2. Non-resident is defined as anyone not residing in West Chester Township at the time of purchase or death.

IV. POLICIES – ACTIVE CEMETERY

A. Hours of Operation

- 1. The Township’s active cemetery, Brookside Cemetery, is located at 6425 West Chester Road and is open to the public daily from dawn until dusk. Cemetery personnel may be reached in emergencies by contacting West Chester Township Communications.

B. Sales

- 1. Burial space in Brookside Cemetery is offered to both West Chester Township residents and non-residents pursuant to these policies. Available graves are limited and located within certain sections of the cemetery. Persons desiring to purchase graves may visit the cemetery office by appointment, and the Township will assist in site selection based on availability and purchaser’s needs.
- 2. Both resident and non-resident grave prices are established by the Board of Trustees. Residents may purchase up to four graves per household or family at the resident rate and designate the use of graves to anyone living. A household or family may purchase additional graves at the non-resident rate. See Rate Schedule for current costs.

3. A resident may not purchase graves at the resident price and assign the grave to an already deceased person not residing in West Chester Township at the time of death. Full payment by cash, check or credit card must be made at the time of purchase.
 - a) Long-time residents of West Chester Township who have left the Township to reside elsewhere are considered non-residents for the purpose of purchasing graves at resident rates. Non-residents as defined in this situation have the right to appeal by submitting a “Non-Resident Appeal for Resident Rates” Application. Applications are considered on an individual and non-precedent setting basis.
4. The recorded owner of a grave in Brookside Cemetery shall be the controller of said grave and interments. The recorded owner may sign a notarized release to designate use of said grave to another person. In doing so the owner relinquishes all rights to said grave to the designee.
5. Upon the death of the recorded owner, the control of an unused or undesignated grave shall fall to the legally designated beneficiary. If there is no beneficiary, control shall follow the natural order of spouse, to children, to parents, to grandchildren, to great grandchildren.
6. Purchases will be recorded in Township records and a receipt will be issued. The Township retains the property and the grave owner has the right to burial on the site. Should a recorded owner no longer want or need an unused grave upon written request, the Township will consider purchasing unused graves at the original purchase price.

C. Interments

1. Interments are scheduled Monday through Friday with arrivals no later than 3:00 p.m. and Saturday and holiday arrivals before noon.
 - a) Overtime fees apply to Saturday and holiday interments.
 - b) The opening and closing fee must be paid either before or at the time of interment.
 - c) Burials are not conducted on Sundays.
2. All interments require a twenty-four (24) hour notice.
 - d) Burial vaults are required for full body burials.
3. Cremains are limited to two (2) burials per single grave.

D. Disinterment

1. All disinterment shall comply with cemetery policies, procedures, rules and regulations and Ohio State Law.
2. See Rate Schedule for costs.

E. Monuments and Markers

1. The recorded grave owner shall be the controller of said grave in respect to the placement of any marker, monument, flowers and/or decorations. Upon the death of the owner, control shall go to the legally designated beneficiary. If there is no beneficiary, control will follow the natural order of spouse, to children, to parents, to grandchildren, to great grandchildren.
2. All monuments and markers must fit the lot or single grave in which they are intended. Single graves vary and it is the responsibility of the purchaser or purchaser's agent to check with the Township as to the proper size and location. All monuments and markers are to be lettered appropriately. Position and direction of face are to conform to the section in which the monument is to be placed. Any lettering or marking other than the deceased's name, birth and death dates must meet the approval of the Township. It is the responsibility of the purchaser and the purchaser's agent to check with the Township for proper location of lettering and style.
3. All monuments and markers must be placed on a concrete foundation of approved size and depth. Such foundations shall be built by the Township.
4. Monuments and markers will be permitted only in standard granite, bronze or approved marble.
5. Monuments and markers that do not conform to industry standard in design and style must first be approved by the Township.
6. Statues and figurines are not permitted.

F. Visitation

1. Visitation in Brookside Cemetery is from dawn until dusk. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Pets are not allowed in the cemetery.

G. Flowers and Decorations

1. The recorded owner of a grave shall be the controller in respect to the placement of flowers and/or decorations on said grave. Upon the death of the owner, control shall go to the legally designated beneficiary. If there is no beneficiary, control will follow the natural order of spouse, to children, to parents, to grandchildren, to great grandchildren.
2. Annuals and perennials are permitted to be planted on graves. Trees, bushes, shrubs and vines are not permitted.
3. Artificial flowers are permitted year round and must be in a metal or plastic vase. Glass containers such as vases and jars are not permitted as they present a danger.
4. Memorial Day and special holiday decorations may be placed for two weeks after the holiday. Decorative items will be discarded by Township personnel if not removed sooner.
5. Christmas decorations must be removed by April first. After April first, Township personnel will dispose of all remaining Christmas decorations.
6. Toys are not permitted.

7. Flowers and decorations must be maintained by the recorded owner of the grave. Any flower or decoration deemed unsightly will be removed and discarded.
8. Wind or heavy rains may scatter flowers and decorations. The Township is not responsible for salvaging these items. All retrieved decorations are discarded.

H. Behavior

1. All persons are asked to remember the cemetery grounds are sacredly devoted to the interment of the deceased and all that violate the policies and procedures of the cemetery may be excluded therefrom.
2. Any person who damages or disturbs any monument, marker, tree, shrub, plant, memorial or any other property within the cemetery, or moves or removes same will be subject to criminal penalties as provided by the Ohio Revised Code.

***Disclaimer - The Township reserves the right to change these rules and regulations without notice.**