



The Case for Green Burial

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Green Burial Project



3 Tenets of Green Burial

- **No embalming**
- **No vault**
- **Biodegradable coffin or shroud**



How Do Americans Dispose of Their Dead?

- **2,712,630 registered deaths in the U.S.** (Source: National Vital Statistics Reports, Final Data for 2015)
- **Burials 43.5%** (Source: NFDA 2017 Cremation and Burial Report)
- **Cremations 50.2%** (Source: NFDA 2017 Cremation and Burial Report)
- **Others—gifts to science, wet cremation, burial reefs, burial at sea, home burials, no recoverable remains, green burials**



Conventional Funeral Services--Costs

2017 Prices in the Piedmont (Source: FCAP 2017 Funeral Price Survey)

- **Basic Services Fee -- \$505 to \$3495**
- **Embalming Fee -- \$350 to \$1195**
- **Transportation to Funeral Home Fee -- \$90 to \$595**
- **Caskets Prices -- \$95 to \$5245**



Conventional Burials--Costs

Burial Prices (Source: www.everplans.com/articles/how-much-does-it-cost-to-be-buried-in-a-cemetery)

- **Plot -- \$750-\$3750 (local)**
- **Vault / grave liner -- \$500-\$2500**
- **Opening / closing grave -- \$800-\$1500**
- **Endowment care -- 0-\$250**
- **Headstone / marker -- \$500-\$4000**
- **Installation of headstone / marker -- \$450-\$850**



Conventional Cremations

- **Direct Cremation**
 - removal of body to funeral home or crematory
 - obtain permits and authorization
 - body heated in a cremation oven (called a "retort")
 - cremains (i.e., ashes) returned to family
 - family can dispose of cremains as they see fit



Conventional Cremations--Costs

2017 Prices in the Piedmont (Source: FCAP 2017 Funeral Price Survey)

- **Direct cremation -- \$695-\$3095**
- **Cremation with funeral director services would include variations on the above (transportation, storage, basic services fee, urn, etc.)**
- **Plots -- \$600 (Durham) - \$25,000 (Duke Gardens)**



Environmental Costs

- **Formaldehyde**—approx. 800,000 gallons of solution buried annually, plus manufacturing, handling, worker exposure, waste disposal and cleanup
- **Metals**—2,700 tons of bronze / copper; 90,000 tons of steel annually
- **Hardwoods**—30 million board ft. of oak, maple & cherry annually
- **Concrete**—1.6 million tons of vault concrete buried annually
- **Cremation fuel**—@ approx. 28 gals. / body (about 1260 miles in a Prius) = 32,760,000 gallons per year.

(Source: www.fcasocal.org)



How to reduce the environmental costs

- **Skip embalming -- In most cases, it is not required by NC law.**
- **Choose a low impact coffin--FSC certified unfinished wood; willow; felted wool; cardboard**
- **Choose a shroud -- linen, silk, cotton, old quilt.**
- **Select a cemetery that does not require a vault or grave liner.**
- **Choose a crematory that uses pollutant filters/scrubbers.**



Green Burial Costs

- **Plot -- \$1000-\$4500**
- **Opening / closing the grave -- \$0-\$1050**
- **Biodegradable coffins / shrouds -- \$0-\$1500**
- **Perpetual care -- \$0-\$350**

(Source: websites of NC green burial grounds)



NC Green Burial Grounds

- **Historic Oakwood Cemetery (hybrid), Raleigh**
- **Highland Meadow (hybrid), Fayetteville**
- **Pine Forest (natural), Wake Forest**
- **Forest Lawn (hybrid), Candler**
- **Green Hills Cemetery (hybrid), Asheville**
- **Carolina Memorial Sanctuary (conservation burial ground), Mills River**
- **Church of the Burrow (natural), Moncure**



What are your next steps?

- **Decide what you want**
- **Write it down**
 - **Wills**
 - **Advance Directives (NC Health Care Power of Attorney and NC Advance Directive for a Natural Death), 5 Wishes, HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) Consent Form, MOST (Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment) Form**
 - **Specific instructions about disposition of your remains**
- **Discuss it with your family**