COOPERATIVE MEMORIAL SOCIETY

Understanding Funeral, Burial & Cremation Options

A reference guide from your CMS educational session | coopmemorial.org | 403-248-2044

TYPES OF CEREMONY

- **Funeral** — service where the body or remains are present.
- **Memorial service** — no body present; can happen anytime, anywhere.
- **Celebration of life** — informal gathering, before or after disposition.
- Ceremonies can be traditional, faith-based, secular, public, or private.

BURIAL OPTIONS

- Earth burial: body interred in the ground at a cemetery.
- Mausoleum or crypt: above-ground place of interment.
- Costs include professional services, transportation, casket or container, cemetery fees, and a marker.
- *Ask what is included in the quoted price and which charges come from the cemetery.*

CREMATION OPTIONS

- Approximately 79% of Albertans now choose cremation.
- Direct cremation (no ceremony) typically costs $1,500–$3,500 in Alberta.
- A traditional full-service funeral now averages approximately $13,700 in Canada.
- Remains may be kept, interred, placed in a columbarium niche, or scattered.
- Ceremony timing is flexible — a memorial can happen days or months later.

GREEN & NATURAL BURIAL

- No embalming, no concrete vault — biodegradable casket or shroud.
- Alberta sites: Prairie Sky Cemetery (Calgary), Rosehill Grasslands (Lethbridge), Aurora Gardens (Edmonton area).
- CMS includes green burial plans in its provider agreements.
- Ask CMS for a full list of certified natural burial sites near you.

DISPOSITION & CEREMONY TIMING

- Disposition and ceremony do not need to happen at the same time.
- A ceremony can happen before, at the time of, or well after disposition.
- Meaningful choices can be made in stages — no single sequence is required.

ALBERTA CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

- A disposition permit must be obtained before final disposition.
- A pre-need contract must be in writing and delivered within 7 days.
- Pre-need funds must be held in trust to protect consumers.
- The executor has first authority; if none, family or friends may act.
- *Always ask for written details and take time to review them.*

WHAT TO RECORD FOR YOUR FAMILY

- Personal and emergency contact information.
- Location of key documents: will, Personal Directive, Enduring Power of Attorney.
- Banking, investments, insurance, and pension details.
- Digital accounts and passwords.
- Your funeral wishes and final arrangements.
- *Planning ahead reduces stress and uncertainty for the people you love.*

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QUESTIONS TO ASK A FUNERAL PROVIDER

- What is included in the quoted price?
- Which charges come from the cemetery, not the funeral home?
- Are prices available in writing before I commit?
- Do you offer green or natural burial arrangements?
- What happens if I have a pre-arranged plan with CMS?

ABOUT CMS & HOW TO JOIN

- Non-profit co-operative serving Albertans since 1966.
- Members access negotiated funeral pricing with vetted, locally owned reputable providers.
- Serves Calgary, Edmonton, Central Alberta, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat.
- Membership gives flexible access to pre-negotiated rates — not a pre-paid plan.
- No pressure to choose a plan or provider at any CMS session.

ALBERTA RESOURCES

- coopmemorial.org — plans, pricing, green burial guide, member resources.
- Alberta Funeral Services Regulatory Board: afsrb.ab.ca
- Green Burial Society of Canada: greenburialcanada.ca
- Prairie Sky Cemetery (Calgary): calgary.ca
- Rosehill Grasslands Green Burial Grounds — Lethbridge.
- Aurora Gardens / Meadows of Rosehill — Edmonton area.

NOTES

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