Understanding the Cremation Process



At Lake Macquarie Memorial Park we strive to maintain high standards of beauty, peace and tranquillity.

We believe it is a privilege to serve families and in so doing we take the utmost care and respect, which is reflected in how we deal with a loved one throughout the cremation process.

We always:

- Abide by Government regulations, including those of the State Government Health Department*
- Follow our own strict policies, procedures and code of behaviour
- Ensure the name plate remains alongside the deceased throughout the cremation process
- Ensure cremated remains of an individual are kept together and not mixed with other cremated remains
- Bury unclaimed cremated remains in a dignified manner within the grounds of the crematorium

In all cases, only one deceased is cremated at a time (unless there are extenuating circumstances and then only with the approval and knowledge of the family and in accordance with Health Department Regulations*).

Detailing the Process

Following the funeral service, the coffin is moved to the crematorium.

Once accepted by crematorium staff the coffin remains sealed throughout the cremation process.

Verification of deceased

Staff verify the identity of the deceased via the name plate on the coffin, ensuring the details match the 'Application for Cremation' (the document required by Health Department Regulations* before a cremation can take place) and the Medical Certificate or Coroner's Cremation Permit received from the funeral director. In addition to confirmation of death the medical certificate indicates if battery powered devices (such as a pacemaker) have been removed.





* Only applicable in NSW and QLD

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Flowers

Flowers remaining with the coffin at this stage are carefully disposed. Families should ask their funeral director during the arrangement process if they wish to retain flowers following the funeral service.

When will the cremation occur?

The cremation will generally be carried out on the same day as the funeral service but, in accordance with Health Department guidelines*, can occur up to 48 hours later. If the cremation is not to occur immediately, the coffin is held in a refrigerated holding room.

Preparation for cremation

When cremation is due to occur:

- The coffin is transferred onto an insertion trolley



* Only applicable in NSW



- Any items that may hinder the cremation process are removed such as metal handles
- The name plate is removed, and placed alongside the cremator, for identification throughout the process
- The coffin is inserted into the cremator.

In all cases, the coffin and deceased are cremated together.

Cremation begins immediately once the coffin is inserted into the cremator.

The cremation process

Cremators generally comprise of a main cremating chamber, a secondary air chamber and a holding chamber. The coffin is cremated within the main chamber.



In accordance with Health Department Regulations*, coffins must be cremated individually, in other words, only one coffin is ever placed inside the main cremation chamber at any one time. Likewise there may only be one body per coffin except in special circumstances which require permission from the Director General of Health.

At the completion of the main phase of the cremation process the cremated remains are moved into the holding chamber to finalise the cremation. Once finalised, the cremated remains are placed into a cooling container. When cooled, metallic contents (prostheses, coffin nails etc) are separated from the remains.

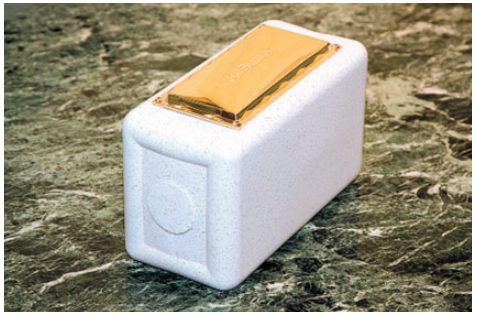
Cremated remains or ashes

Commonly cremated remains are referred to as 'ashes'. However, technically there are no ashes, what are left are the fragile calcified bone fragments.

- Radioactive ashes are treated differently – further details can be provided by your Advisor.

Ash container

The cremated remains are transferred to a processor to reduce the bone fragments to a fine granule type consistency which in turn is placed in a sealed container. The name plate and an identifying label are attached.



The container accommodates all of the cremated remains. In the unusual event that an ash container is insufficient to hold all of the ashes, an extra container is used.

Ash containers are held until instructions are received from the applicant or their nominated representative. The ashes are then, subject to Health Department Regulations*, dealt with according to the instruction given.

Unclaimed ashes

Should no instructions be received within a reasonable time (approximately 12 months), in line with Health Department Regulations*, unclaimed cremated remains are interred within the grounds of the crematorium.

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Lake Macquarie Memorial Park
Cemetery & Crematorium

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