

WAGGA WAGGA CEMETERIES POLICY

Reference number:	POL 039
Approval date:	17 October 2022
Policy owner:	Manager Parks and Strategic Operations
Next review:	September 2025

Council maintains six Cemeteries and one Crematorium within the City of Wagga Wagga Local Government Area. These are located at Wagga Wagga (Lawn Cemetery/Crematorium and Monumental Cemetery), Tarcutta, Humula, Currawarna and Uranquinty.

Purpose

The objective is to set clear guidelines for the efficient operation and maintenance of these Cemeteries/Crematorium.

Scope

This policy covers all Cemetery/Crematorium related matters involving Council, staff, Funeral Directors and customers, legislative authorities and general contractors.

Policy Provisions

Control of Cemeteries by Local Government

Following amended provisions of the Local Government Act, Council assumed control of the Cemeteries as of 1 March 1968. All monies held in Trust and all records and documents held by the Churches were to be submitted to Council at that time. As many Church records were incomplete at the time of the transfer, Council accepts no responsibility for Reservations, Burials or Monuments arranged prior to the effective date.

In the instance where there is no proof of grave ownership, approval to use the grave can only be given at the discretion of the Manager Parks and Strategic Operations.

Funeral Bookings

- All funerals must be arranged through a Funeral Director.
- Funeral Directors are to give at least twenty-four (24) hours notice for bookings for the Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium and forty-eight (48) hours notice for bookings for the Monumental and Rural Cemeteries.
- Funeral Directors must submit relevant documentation signed by the family to the Cemetery office the evening prior to all burials and cremations being conducted or a late fee will apply.
- Council accepts bookings from Funeral Directors outside business hours.

Cremation Paperwork

All necessary forms and medical certificates are to be fully completed and submitted to the Cemetery office prior to any cremation taking place. No fees payable to the medical practitioner and/or the Medical Referee will be payable by the Council as the Cremation Authority.

Unacceptable coffin contents and implants for Cremations

- Pacemakers, cardiac defibrillators, drug infusion pumps and irradiated metal pellets must be removed prior to cremation.
- Poly-vinyl chloride (PVC), latex-based rubber products, fluid in any container, bottles, cans, glass products, batteries, animals or books are not permitted in any coffin that will be cremated.

Reservation of Grave Sites

Wagga Wagga City Council allows grave sites to be reserved by way of a reservation deposit being paid to the Cemetery office with the balance to be payable when the grave site is used.

Memorials

Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium

- All memorial components
 - Are to be ordered through the Cemetery office – including bronze plaques, granite, ceramic photos and vases
 - Must be ordered and approved by the grantee or Authority for Burial. Funeral Directors are not permitted to order memorials on behalf of families.
- Council accepts no responsibility for the condition or theft of memorials after placement.
- In section 3, only 380 x 280mm bronze plaques (without granite backing panels) are permitted.
- In sections 1, 2, 4-7 and 10, memorial options allowed are bronze plaques, plaques on granite panels or engraved granite panels. Maximum size of memorials for each burial is not to exceed 865mm in width and 355mm in height (300mm in sections 1 and 2).
- In section 8 and 12, only prescribed granite headstones are allowed.
- No glass items, drink bottles, containers or cans are permitted at memorial positions.
- Ceramic items e.g. figurines less than 15cm in height and secured as below are permitted (maximum three (3) per position).
- Solar lights and windmills are permitted only if they are secured in a Council approved vase. Council accepts no responsibility for any damage caused to the vases in this process.
- Secured items are not to encroach on neighbouring graves.
- Items are to be secured only to the bronze plaque or granite panel and not to the concrete beam. Council accepts no responsibility for the condition of the memorial when items are secured.
- Any items not meeting these requirements will be removed; the grantee will be advised where possible and items will be held for collection at the Cemetery Office for three months.

- Only approved Council vases which are purchased through the Cemetery office are permitted and Cemetery staff will remove all non-standard containers.
- Payment of burials and memorials must be paid in full before any memorial can be placed.

Monumental and Rural Cemeteries:

- Families are responsible for arranging memorials subject to the necessary permit being submitted and approved. Council accepts no responsibility for the condition and upkeep of the grave and any monument placed.

Veterans Affairs Memorials

The Department of Veterans Affairs is liable for all costs associated with the memorialisation in all Cemeteries and the Crematorium within the Wagga Wagga City Council area for deceased ex-service personnel, organised and arranged directly by that Department with the family of the deceased.

Council will allow placement of memorial plaques supplied by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission within the Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium provided the plaque size conforms with the standard size of plaques used in the relevant section of the Cemetery or Crematorium.

Planting of Shrubs

The planting of shrubs, bushes, flowers etc in the Lawn Cemetery/Crematorium gardens by the public is not permitted and any such plants will be removed.

Natural Burials

Natural burials are accepted at the Lawn Cemetery and the four rural cemeteries. All requirements for natural burials are to be complied with under the provisions of the Public Health Act 2010 and Public Health (Disposal of Bodies) Regulation 2012.

Exhumations

Exhumations are not to take place unless prior written consent has been obtained from the Director General of the NSW Department of Health, the Order for Exhumation has been issued by Wagga Wagga City Council and the exhumation is completed in accordance with the NSW Department of Health Guidelines. This clause does not apply if an exhumation has been ordered by a Court.

Removal of Cremated Remains within the Crematorium Gardens

Removal of cremated remains must be applied for in writing by the grantee. An administration fee for the removal of cremated remains will apply. Cremated remains will not be removed until applicable fees are paid in full. If the grantee does not wish to retain the Crematorium Gardens position for future interment the position is relinquished back to Council with no refund given.

Legislative Context

Council is bound to operate under the provisions of the Public Health Act 2010 and Public Health (Disposal of Bodies) Regulation 2012.

The Manager Operations is the Registrar of Cremations in accordance with the Public Health Regulation 2012, Part 8, Div 5.

Revision History

Revision number	Council resolution	Council meeting date
1	Res. No. 68/578	29 February 1968
2	Res. No. 1155/00	25 September 2000
3	Res. No. 141/03	24 February 2003
4	Res. No. 04/243	23 August 2004
5	Res No: 09/077	27 July 2009
6	Res No: 11/021.7	28 February 2011
7	Res No: 11/296	21 November 2011
8	Res No: 13/224.1	26 August 2013
9	Res No: 17/279	28 August 2017
10	Res No: 22/354	17 October 2022