



# Fact sheet GREEN CEMETERIES AND FUNERALS



## Definitions according to the dictionary:

- cemetery is the land where the dead are buried
- funeral is the solemn ceremony celebrated to honour someone's remains

Several individuals are interested in ecological funerals and cemeteries (also referred to as green). Making such an ecological gesture later in life would be another small contribution for mother earth! Is this possible in New Brunswick? Is it possible in our Southeast NB region?

## Current practices related to the burial of a body:

- have evolved over the years in order to satisfy the requirements of social ethics and body preservation
- prevent rapid decomposition of remains (help preserve the remains for longer periods of time)
- make natural body decomposition difficult
- use noxious substances for embalming
- ensure that toxic products are buried in the soil. Thus the soil is contaminated and ground water is potentially threatened
- consume more energy than required
- produce a great deal of greenhouse gases (GHG)

## AN ALTERNATIVE IS POSSIBLE! WE MUST DO OUR PART, REQUEST IT

In NB, **cemeteries** are governed by the Cemetery Companies Act, NB LRN 1973, c C-1. Three types of cemeteries exist: private cemeteries incorporated into companies and managed by a Board of Directors, cemeteries managed by religious parishes and family cemeteries managed by the landowner. The 3 types of cemeteries may establish their own regulations in addition to those of the law. There is a NB Cemeteries Association: contact person is: Mr. Ed Graham, [nbcemeteries@gmail.com](mailto:nbcemeteries@gmail.com)

**There are presently no ecological cemeteries in NB, but the law does not prevent them**

In NB, the question of **funerals** is determined by Bill 62, by religion and by the individual's wishes. Funeral homes are private businesses that offer funeral services according to the traditions, customs and desires of each. There is a NB Association of Funeral Homes and Embalmers: contact person is Mr. Phillip Ells, Jr, Executive Director, [www.nbfuneraldirectors.ca/executives](http://www.nbfuneraldirectors.ca/executives)

**It is currently possible, in NB, to request ecological funerals.**

According to the encyclical '*Laudato si'*' 2015 from Pope Francis ([www.eglise.catholique.fr/vatican/les-ecrits/395582-laudato-si-une-feuille-de-route](http://www.eglise.catholique.fr/vatican/les-ecrits/395582-laudato-si-une-feuille-de-route)) "*Humanity still has the ability to work together to build our common home*", "*the human being is still able to respond positively*"; "*all is not lost, because human beings capable of degrading to the extreme, can also be overcome, again opting for good and regenerating itself.*" Post '*Laudato si'*', soul-searching will have to include a new dimension, by considering not only how communion is lived with God, with others and with ourselves, but also with all creatures and nature.

### RESOURCES:

NB Cemeteries Act LRN-B 1973, c C-1

Bill 62 NB Embalmers, Funeral Directors and Funeral Providers Act

Local Funeral Homes to ensure that the wishes are respected, and also help find solutions to suit the budget, and facilitate the final disposition of the deceased in a safe and practical manner.

NB Cemeteries Association: [nbcemeteries@gmail.com](mailto:nbcemeteries@gmail.com)

NB Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association:  
[www.nbfuneraldirectors.ca/index2](http://www.nbfuneraldirectors.ca/index2)

Department of Health NB: [www.gnb.ca/0051/index-f.asp](http://www.gnb.ca/0051/index-f.asp)

Natural Burial Association: [www.naturalburialassoc.ca/contact-us](http://www.naturalburialassoc.ca/contact-us)

Fédération des coopératives funéraires du Québec : [www.fcfq.coop/en](http://www.fcfq.coop/en)

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