

The Cremation Process

As owners, operators and providers of cremation services in Saskatchewan, we assume special responsibilities to the community we serve. In acceptance of our responsibility in the practice of cremation, **We Believe:**

- In dignity and respect in the care of Pet Remains; in compassion for the living who survive them; and in the memorialization of the dead.
- In full disclosure and informing the public of the role of cremation so that everyone can make knowledgeable decisions about cremation, memorialization and final disposition.
- We pledge to conduct ourselves in every way and at all times in such a manner as to deserve the public trust.

The cremationist removes any items not wished to be cremated (such as collar) prior to the process. The operator places an identification tag with the body to properly identify the cremated remains during the cremation process and once they are returned to the shelter. This is a very important step as it ensures the family receives the correct cremains.

The body is placed in the cremation chamber through the top door. (Each cremation is done individually so there is no co-mingling of the remains.) The cremation chamber is lined with fire-resistant bricks on the walls and ceiling. The floor is made from a special masonry compound formulated specifically to withstand extremely high temperatures.

Once the body is placed in the machine, the chamber door (which is about six inches thick) is closed and the machine is started.

The crematorium goes through a warm-up cycle before the main burner turns on. After the machine is up to temperature, the main burner ignites, starting the cremation process. The temperatures within the chamber often reach 750 to 800 degrees Celcius, and the burners are fueled by natural gas.

It generally takes about 2.5 to 3.5 hours for a body to be completely reduced to just bone fragments, depending on its size.

After the entire cremation process is complete, a cool down period of 30 minutes is required before the bone fragments can be handled for further processing. The cremains are swept to the front of the machine with a special metal broom, and recovered through an access door where they are swept into a cooling pan. This is taken to a tabletop work area where the operator goes through the fragments by hand to remove any pieces of metal such as surgical screws, joint replacements, and pins.

The remaining bone fragments are then placed into a special processor that further reduces the size of the bone fragments into a fine powder through pulverization.

The cremains are then placed into a plastic bag within a scatterbox, or the urn the family has selected.



Information About Pet Cremation



Moose Jaw Humane Society

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What is Cremation?

Cremation is as old as history, but it is also as modern as today. It is within the reach of everyone, no matter their position or financial limits in life.

Cremation is an alternative to earth burial. It is a step in the preparation of bodily remains for memorialization and final rest. The Moose Jaw Humane Society carries out this step with full respect for the dignity of the deceased. The remains are placed in the cremation chamber where, through the process of heat and evaporation, the body is reduced to its original elements—bone fragments, not ashes (called “cremains”).



What Costs are Involved?

We at the Moose Jaw Humane Society are able to save families from paying an out-of-town transportation fee, as the shelter owns and operates a new crematorium, located right here in Moose Jaw. How much a family chooses to spend beyond the cremation itself is entirely a personal decision. There are often other real costs incurred both before and usually after cremation. Costs before can include a fee for removal from the place of death, and/or a priority fee that ensures the cremains are returned to the family in a matter of days rather than the standard week.

Urns and Options

Costs after cremation can include the purchase of an urn, keepsake, cemetery plot, and gravemarker.

An urn is a container in which cremains are permanently retained. There is a wide selection of urn materials, from wood and granite to marble or metal. Urns may be relocated if a family moves; a major advantage over other burial alternatives. The minimum container that the MJHS supplies is a simple cardboard box, called a “scatterbox” because many families choose to spread their pet’s cremains at the farm, in the garden, or another favourite place the pet used to visit. The scatterbox may be used for earth burial, however it will degrade over time.

We are also pleased to now offer smaller, “keepsake” sized metal urns. These are ideal when more than one family member wishes to retain a portion of the cremains, or if the family would prefer to scatter some of the cremains and bury the other portion in a pet cemetery, or retain at home.

Metal plaques to hang around the urn bearing the pet’s name and dates may also be purchased through the shelter. These come on a small chain and are available in several sizes and colours.

The MJHS owns and operates its own pet cemetery (cremation burials only) near to the shelter. In addition to plots, families may purchase a memorial stone inscribed with the pet’s name and dates. For some families, cemetery burial provides closure and a tangible place to come to pay their respects.



Arrangement Details

The cremation arrangements need to be made by an immediate family member prior to the cremation, and a simple form indicating their wishes must be completed either at the shelter or the vet clinic of choice. The MJHS will later issue a “cremation certificate” to the family indicating the date of the cremation.

Cremation can also be arranged prior to need, especially if you have a senior or terminally ill pet. It is always advisable to pre-arrange when your emotions are under control. Please feel free to contact us for additional information, or to make an appointment to discuss our cremation options.

All kinds of domestic animals can be cremated (with the exception of pets exceeding 250 lbs) and the MJHS would be honoured to assist you with this service for your pet.



A Caring Choice

Does cremation signify a lack of love or sentiment? Not at all. Cremation itself is not a disposition; it is a method of preparing the remains for memorialization and a future disposition, such as scattering or burial. The desire for a memorial in a pet cemetery, or your own backyard signifies evidence of sentiment of the finest kind. One philosopher has said, “Those who have passed from this world die only when we whom they loved forget them.”