



Green Burial Council Burial Cemetery Certification Standards

	Standard	Hybrid Cemetery	Natural Burial Grounds	Conservation Burial Grounds
1	Accurately represent earned level of GBC certification in marketing materials, websites, and conversations with the public, clients, and the media.			
2	Provide clients and families with the opportunity to participate in the burial and ritual process, in keeping with state law and with these standards.			
3	Accept for burial only decedents that have not been embalmed or those embalmed only with GBC-approved, nontoxic chemicals.			
4	Prohibit the use of a vault (partial, inverted, or otherwise), a vault lid, concrete box, slab or partitioned liner in the burial plot.			
5	All burial containers, shrouds, and other associated products made only of natural, biodegradable materials.			
6	Develop a Maintenance and Operations Manual to be utilized by all staff members, contractors, and volunteers to implement site goals, policies, and best practices.			
7	Establish an endowment fund to ensure the long-term maintenance of the site by setting aside at least 10% of all burial plot sales.			
8	Conduct an Ecological Impact Assessment, starting with a property baseline document that includes existing ecological conditions and sensitive area analysis. Update periodically to assess future property/habitat conditions and plant inventory.			
9	Restrict access and burial operations within sensitive areas as identified in the Ecological Impact Assessment.			



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10	Use operational and burial practices that have no long-term degradation of soil health, plant diversity, water quality, and ecological habitat.			
11	Limit the type and size of memorial markers so that they do not impair the ecological conditions and aesthetic of the natural cemetery landscape.			
12	Site conditions as identified in the Ecological Impact Assessment and sensitive areas analysis, will restrict burial density on the property; therefore, Natural and Conservation burial grounds will have limits to allowable burial density. For Natural Burial, the cemetery's average density shall not exceed 500 burials/acre. For Conservation Burial, average density shall not exceed 300 burials/acre. Burial density of sensitive areas may be transferred to less restricted areas on the property to maximum densities of Natural Burial - 600/acre, Conservation Burial - 400/acre.			
13	Establish and apply strategies that conserve, preserve, enhance, or restore the historic native or natural habitat and flora of the region.			
14	Conserve or restore a minimum of 20 acres, or 5 acres if contiguous to other protected land.*			
15	Operate in conjunction with a government agency or a nonprofit conservation organization that has legally binding responsibility for perpetual monitoring and enforcement of the easement.			
16	Guarantee preservation of the burial ground by deed restriction, conservation easement or other legally binding and irrevocable agreement that runs with the land and is enforceable in perpetuity.			

*All existing certified burial grounds not meeting these changed standards shall be grandfathered and allowed to maintain their current GBC classification.