



Green Burial Council Burial Ground/Cemetery Certification Standards

To be eligible for evaluation, the following minimum requirements must be met:

- ☛ Provide clients and families with the opportunity to participate in the burial and ritual process, in keeping with state law and with these standards.
- ☛ Allow burial descendants that have not been embalmed.
- ☛ Allow the burial without the use of an outer burial container (partial, inverted, or otherwise), a vault lid, concrete box, slab or partitioned liner.
- ☛ Allow the burial of decedents in containers (caskets, shrouds, ect..) made only of renewable, natural, & biodegradable materials.
- ☛ Utilize a Maintenance and Operations Manual which implements site goals, policies, procedures and best practices in alignment with state & local laws or regulations.
- ☛ Provide a succession plan for the cemetery including a source of funds for long-term maintenance of the site; endowment fund or other equivalent.

Cemeteries are then evaluated across the following elective criteria. This is based on materials submitted by the applicant to determine their level of certification (i.e. hybrid, natural or conservation cemetery):

- ☛ Accept for burial only decedents that have not been embalmed or those embalmed only with GBC-approved, nontoxic chemicals.
- ☛ Accept for burial only decedents in containers (caskets, shrouds, ect..) made of renewable, natural, & biodegradable materials.
- ☛ Prohibit the use of an outer burial container (partial, inverted, or otherwise), a vault lid, concrete box, slab or partitioned liner.
- ☛ Limit the type and size of memorial markers at green burial plots so that they do not impair the ecological conditions and aesthetic of the natural cemetery landscape.
- ☛ Complete an Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) that includes existing ecological conditions and sensitive area analysis.
- ☛ Incorporate the preservation and improvement of soil health, water quality, and ecological habitat in operational plan; including restricting access to any sensitive areas as identified in the EIA.
- ☛ Develop a comprehensive horticultural plan incorporating native plants that conserves and enhances a changing natural habitat.
- ☛ Implement a deed restriction, conservation easement or other legally binding and irrevocable agreement for burial ground.
- ☛ 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.
- ☛ Set aside a minimum of 5 acres of land specifically for the purpose of burial, ensuring ample space for burial plots & pathways.
- ☛ Establish a conservation easement of at least 20 acres, or integrate with existing contiguous protected land.
- ☛ Design a site layout that has an average density which does not exceed 400 burials per acre.