



# Natural Burial

If we told you  
your death could  
protect the earth  
and foster new  
life, would you  
believe it?

Without chemical embalming, the body is laid to rest in a biodegradable casket or wrapped in a shroud. Buried in this natural way, in a protected green space, the body contributes to the soil's renewal.

Natural burial grounds bear little resemblance to today's cemeteries. Instead of manicured lawns and rows of tombstones, imagine a meadow of wildflowers or a quiet forest. Small flat stones or a communal dedication commemorate the dead. The land is restored and protected in its natural ecosystem.

Demand for natural burial grounds is growing worldwide, with over 300 sites in the US and UK. Let's create sites in Ontario!

## Why people find natural burial grounds appealing:

Our final act is giving back to the earth.

The nutrients from our body enrich the soil, providing for new life. We bear witness to the cycle of life.

Our final resting place is in nature.

Natural burial grounds are a sanctuary for both the living and the dead. The land is restored to its natural ecosystem, which invites the return of wildlife. Natural cemeteries are also lovely places to visit, and hike, picnic, and reflect.

A natural burial does not pollute.

Many people are surprised to learn that cremation harms the environment. Using approximately two SUV-size tanks of gas, the body is incinerated at about 800° C for two hours, emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Natural burial is simpler.

You've heard people say "just throw me in a burlap bag". Natural burial is gentler than that, but it does do away with the bells and whistles.

For some, natural burial is a traditional approach.

Natural burial was the way many of our ancestors cared for their dead, and to this day, several faiths uphold this tradition.

Our presence in the ground protects nature forever.

With our last breath, we are leaving future generations a lasting legacy.

## Natural burials and funerals

Whether it be big or small, religious or secular, any type of ceremony is compatible with natural burials.

A service may be held before or after the burial, at a place of worship, funeral home, family home, or even outdoors at the burial site. Because embalming doesn't occur with a natural burial, the burial will preferably be held within a few days following the death. There are circumstances that may require a longer delay between the death and burial and there are facilities where the body may rest in a cool environment until burial.

## Costs

Each cemetery sets its own bylaws and prices.

Eco-friendly burial containers, such as shrouds or biodegradable caskets (eg, wicker, pine boxes) are less expensive than the ornate caskets typically used in conventional burials. A natural burial is usually more expensive than cremation, however people may find value in this incremental expense because of the parting gift they leave the earth.

## Is it legal and safe?

**No worries:** diseases don't leach into the soil, water isn't poisoned, and animals have no interest in us.

Cemeteries in Ontario are highly regulated and approved by a medical officer. It's both legal and safe, and there are faiths that have always adhered to this practice, with no ill effects.

## Tell your family

If you are interested in a final resting place in nature, share your wishes with family and friends.

It can be a difficult conversation, but your family will be glad to know your wishes are being fulfilled. This brochure may help prompt the conversation.

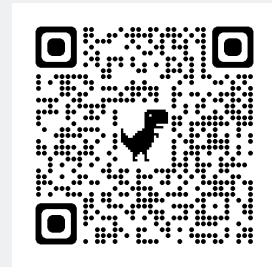
## If you like the idea

There's lots of information at [www.naturalburialassociation.ca](http://www.naturalburialassociation.ca). You'll find answers to all your questions in FAQ and a showcase of some of the world's wonderful natural burial grounds. You can sign up for our e-news so you know when new sites open.





## About NBA

The Natural Burial Association is a volunteer non-profit organization. We want to ensure everyone has an end-of-life option that heals the earth, reduces death's carbon footprint, and reflects their love of nature.



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