

City of Grand Ledge, Michigan
Oakwood Cemetery
Rules and Regulations

Introduction

Oakwood Cemetery and the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden are owned and operated by the City of Grand Ledge, under the direction of the Board of Cemetery Trustees and the City Charter. The Board of Cemetery Trustees has adopted these rules and regulations to care and manage Oakwood Cemetery and the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden, and direct the improvements and embellishments of the grounds at Oakwood Cemetery and the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden. The Board of Cemetery Trustees reserves the right to change these rules and regulations. The Superintendent and/or Sexton have the right to establish temporary rules or make exceptions to existing rules whenever, in their judgment, the best interests of Oakwood Cemetery demand it. These temporary rules or exceptions must be reported immediately to the Board of Cemetery Trustees for approval.

Definitions

Immediate Family – The spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild, great-grandparent or great-grandchild of an owner or owner’s spouse.

Block – An area containing (up to) eight plots.

Marker – A gravestone or headstone, either flush with or above the ground, indicating the name(s) of the deceased buried in the plot(s) or niche(s) immediately adjacent.

Monument – A marker extending above the ground, inscribed with a family name.

Niche – A space within a plot or contained within a marker for burial of cremated human remains.

Owner – The individual or group of individuals listed on the deed for a plot or niche.

Plot – A space used for burial.

Resident – An individual meeting the requirements to be a registered voter of the City of Grand Ledge.

Sexton – The City employee responsible for the day-to-day operations of the cemetery, including but not limited to, block sales, grave openings and closings, enforcement of rules and regulations, contact with funeral directors, installation of marker or monument foundations, cemetery maintenance, and public relations.

Superintendent – The City employee responsible for the overall operation of the cemetery, and hiring and discharging employees.

General Information

City Hall is located at 310 Greenwood St., Grand Ledge, Michigan 48837, and is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. A complete record of owners and burials is maintained at City Hall. This information is available for all purchases and burials taking place after 01 January 1955. Information on purchases and burials prior to 01 January 1955 is less complete. Cemetery personnel are available from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. All information concerning purchasing procedure, rules and regulations, arrangements for and cost of interment services, and other services are available at City Hall.

General Rules

1. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited, except in conjunction with established burial customs.
2. Animals are prohibited, except working leader dogs.
3. Advertising or posting of signs is prohibited.
4. The carrying or use of firearms is prohibited, except in connection with burial ceremonies or by law enforcement officers.
5. Entering before 7:00 a.m. or after dusk is prohibited.
6. The use of profane, loud, or boisterous language is prohibited.
7. The speed limit is 10 miles per hour and driving off established roadways is prohibited.
8. Littering is prohibited.

Plot and Niche Purchasing and Transfers

In Oakwood Cemetery, each plot measures nine feet by nine feet. Each plot may contain only one burial, except as authorized in these rules.

In the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden, each block measures nine feet by nine feet and is divided into eight plots surrounding a center area measuring three feet by three feet. The center area contains a granite marker with a number engraved on it designating the block within the Cremains Garden. In addition, the granite marker has the letters A through H engraved on the edge of its face designating the plots surrounding it. Each plot measures three feet by three feet and is divided into two niches. Each niche may contain only one burial of cremated human remains. The niches located within Plots B and F may be sold individually.

1. Every plot and niche is sold subject to these rules and regulations.
2. Owners are issued a deed to their plot(s) or niche(s) entitling them to burial rights and upkeep of the plot(s) or niche(s).
3. Purchasing of plots or niches for speculative purposes or for resale to third parties other than immediate family is prohibited.
4. Plots and niches are not real property and are exempt from property tax. No mortgage or other encumbrance shall be issued for any plot or niche.
5. Multiple owners shall be individually named on deeds.
6. The City will not refund any payment, or any portion of any payment, if a non-resident owner later becomes a resident.
7. All transfers of ownership must be by notarized Quit Claim Deed. The City will not issue a new deed upon ownership transfer but will update its records and file the Quit Claim Deed with its copy of the original deed.

8. All rights claimed under the purchase of a plot or niche may revert to the City if, for any reason, the purchased plot or niche remains unused for a period of fifty years. The City will make all reasonable attempts to locate any heirs before a reversion takes place.

Interments and Disinterments

Instructions for ordering grave openings have been given to area funeral directors. If your funeral director does not have these instructions, contact City Hall for instructions. Orders for grave openings must be received at least eight working hours in advance of the funeral services.

1. No burial shall take place until the purchase price, the grave opening fee, and all other applicable fees and charges have been paid in full.
2. The City is not responsible for errors in location of burials arising from improper instructions from owners. Orders from funeral directors shall be construed as orders from owners.
3. Funerals arriving after 3:30 p.m. on weekdays, all funerals on Saturdays, and all funerals on President's Day, Veteran's Day, Good Friday, the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve will be assessed an additional charge.
4. No burials are allowed on Sunday, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, or New Year's Day.
5. A burial permit is required for all burials, including cremains. Burial permits for cremains must include complete information, the same as required for regular burial permits, in order for the City to keep complete records.
6. Burials of individuals other than the owner or immediate family are prohibited.
7. No more than one burial may be made per plot, except in the case of a mother and infant, or two infants or two children, buried at the same time. Also, a regular burial and three cremations, or four cremations per plot are allowed.
8. Burials other than human remains are prohibited.
9. All burials shall be in metal or concrete vaults, or concrete rough boxes, except for cremations and infant burials in a casket size of two feet six inches or less. All vaults and rough boxes shall be installed only by authorized firms.
10. Vault firms are responsible for damage to the turf, landscaping, and surrounding markers and monuments, even if City employees assist in vault installation, and shall use planking when and where necessary to protect the turf.
11. City employees will assist with funeral processions, if requested.
12. All interments and disinterments shall be performed by City employees.
13. Scattering of cremains is prohibited.
14. Disinterment is prohibited except for due cause and then only with approval of the Health Department; and shall take place only between October 1 and April 30 unless by court order. Foundations where disinterment occurs will be moved and reset at owners' expense.
15. City staff will remove funeral designs and floral pieces as soon as they become unsightly, and assumes no responsibility for their return.
16. Restoration of landscaping, funeral designs, and floral pieces damaged during a disinterment will be the responsibility of the owner.

Markers and Monuments

1. Markers and monuments in Oakwood Cemetery shall be located on the west edge of the plot(s) they reference and shall correspond in size with the size of the plot or plots it marks but shall in no event exceed four feet in height. Markers or monuments in Oakwood Cemetery containing niches for burying cremains must be constructed such that access to the niche after cremains are placed inside will deface or destroy the marker or monument and must be registered with the City. The City will remove, at the owner's expense, any marker or monument containing niches for burying cremains, unless it is registered with the City within thirty days of installation. All cremains placed inside markers or monuments containing niches must be recorded with the City within thirty days.
2. Markers in the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden shall be made of granite and may include a bronze plaque, shall be flush with the ground and shall not exceed twenty-eight inches in length, sixteen inches in width and four inches in depth, should contain the full name of the deceased and engraving shall be performed by a monument company, shall be oriented toward the pathway surrounding the block within which the marker is to be placed, and shall first be placed on the niche closest to the pathway and a second marker may then be placed on the niche furthest from the pathway.
3. Family monuments are permitted only if placed in symmetrical alignment with markers, and are prohibited in the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden.
4. All markers and monuments shall be made of granite. Homemade markers and markers made of other materials such as marble, wood, plastic, cement or steel are prohibited.
5. Markers shall be kept in good repair by the owner for safety and aesthetic value.
6. Any temporary marker left for more than one year is no longer the responsibility of Oakwood Cemetery.
7. Inscriptions on markers and monuments shall not contain offensive or improper language, images, or markings as judged by the Board of Cemetery Trustees. Owners shall be responsible for all expenses for removal of markers deemed offensive or improper.
8. All markers and monuments must have foundations and shall not be delivered until a foundation is installed and payment is made in full. Orders for foundations shall be placed a minimum of two weeks in advance of delivery. Foundations will not be poured between October 1 and April 30.
9. Marker or monument companies are responsible for all damages to the turf, landscaping, and surrounding markers and monuments occurring during installation.
10. The City assumes no responsibility for damage to markers or monuments.
11. Individual mausoleums and crypts are prohibited.
12. No marker shall be installed unless the Sexton is present.

Block Care, Maintenance, and Improvements

1. Regular maintenance of turf and landscaping shall be performed by City personnel.
2. Artificial flowers and wreaths, and grave blankets are allowed only from November 1 through March 31. The Sexton will remove all artificial flowers and wreaths, and all grave blankets on April 1. Artificial flowers shall not be placed in the ground. Artificial flowers and wreaths may be placed in the mausoleum at any time; however, the Sexton will removed them each year prior to Memorial Day.
3. Planting or removal of trees and shrubbery is prohibited unless approved by the Superintendent or Sexton as to species, variety, location, and time of planting.

4. In Oakwood Cemetery, flowers may be planted within eighteen inches of a marker or monument, and under no circumstances shall plantings be allowed outside the boundaries of the owner's plot(s), no sod shall be removed which is not next to a marker or monument and then not more than eighteen inches, and plantings may be set next to markers or monuments, but must be kept free from grass and weeds.
5. In the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden, floral arrangements from a funeral service may remain for seven days, fresh-cut flowers are allowed but shall be removed, at the discretion of the Sexton, when they become unsightly or detract from the beauty of the Oakwood Cemetery Cremains Garden, no containers are allowed, and digging and/or planting any flower, shrub, or plant in the ground is prohibited.
6. Wooden or equally perishable material, fences, curbs, hedges, and copings are prohibited.
7. Ground cover of stone, limestone, woodchips, etc. is prohibited.
8. Urns are prohibited unless approved by the Superintendent or Sexton as to material and location.
9. The City will remove urns not used by June 1 of each year and will dispose of urns not claimed within one year after removal.
10. Urns of glass, clay, or ceramic, and any plastic containers of any type are prohibited. The City will hold remove and hold such containers for one year, and will dispose of such containers not claimed within one year after removal.
11. Benches are prohibited unless approved by the Superintendent or Sexton as to material and location. Any bench must be installed on a foundation, which is flush with the ground. Foundations shall be installed at the owner's expense and at the same cost as foundations for markers and monuments.
12. Benches containing niches for burying cremains must be constructed such that access to the niche after cremains are placed inside will deface or destroy the bench and must be registered with the City. The City will remove, at the owner's expense, any bench containing niches for burying cremains, unless it is registered with the City within thirty days of installation. All cremains placed inside benches containing niches must be recorded with the City within thirty days.
13. Block corner posts are prohibited unless installed by City personnel, flush with the ground and at the owner's expense.
14. Mounding of graves is prohibited.
15. The City reserves the right to remove and dispose of, without notice, any unsightly, deteriorated, neglected, or prohibited items, except markers or monuments.