

PUBLIC STATEMENT

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American Flags Displayed on Graves in Oakwood Cemetery

GRAND LEDGE, MI, November 25, 2019 - The City has historically and currently works with area volunteer groups to ensure American flags are displayed on veteran graves for both Memorial Day and Veterans Day. The flags displayed for Memorial Day are left on display through Flag Day and then removed. The flags displayed for Veterans Day are removed following Veterans Day.

According to the Oakwood Cemetery Rules and Regulations, adopted by the Board of Cemetery Trustees, “the City reserves the right to remove and dispose of, without notice, any unsightly, deteriorated, neglected, or prohibited items, except markers or monuments.”

Additionally, the United States Flag Code stipulates:

§6(c) The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all-weather flag is displayed.

§8(b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

§8(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

Recognizing the importance many place on displaying the American flag on veteran graves, the City allows flags displayed by families on graves in Oakwood Cemetery during April through October. However, the City does not allow the American flag to be displayed on graves in Oakwood Cemetery during the winter months. Winters in Michigan are frequently inclement and would quickly render flags “in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display.” Additionally, the flags would touch the ground beneath them after any snowfall greater than a few inches.

The City, its elected officials, and its employees hold the American flag in the highest respect. The City will always strive to ensure any display of the American flag on public property complies with the United States Flag Code and appropriately reflects the respect due to the American flag.