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10/01/2019
V-3-2019

Dear Fellow Fraternal Funeral Friends (try saying THAT five times real fast!):

Pumpkins out for sale, footballs sailing thru stadiums, and cooler temps all mean that FALL is finally upon us! With all of the hot days in September, I was beginning to wonder if autumn was going to bypass us, but it's officially here. I always like to see how long I can go without turning the heat in my home on, which is a game that my wife does not enjoy!

I hope that you either have or are planning to register for our November convention at Wintergreen Resort. Great speakers, great food, beautiful scenery, and enjoyable fellowship with your colleagues are all guaranteed. Taking 24 hours out of your hectic schedule can be difficult, but I urge you to make every effort to attend this meeting.

While we ourselves are usually too busy to keep track of what is politically going on with our profession in Richmond, I want to assure you that both Bruce and Bo have their finger on the pulse of any meeting, proposed rule, or agenda that might germinate in our capital city. Having these two gentlemen monitor anything that might affect our industry is a reassuring thought, and I want our membership to be cognizant of the diligence that the Keeneys pay to the massive amounts of bills that are brought forth every year.

The IFHV has a long and proud history, and it is up to you and I to continue its legacy. Funeral service is changing by the day, and surrounding yourself with the best professionals in the state is a key way of staying on top of each and every one of those changes. Thanks for your dedication to the death care profession and for your membership in IFHV!

All the best-

Sammy Oakey

Cheers-

Sammy

Sammy Oakey
IFHV President

USPS Updates Shipping Process for Cremated Remains

Effective September 30, new shipping rules go into effect for the United States Postal Service

According to the post office, the changes "aim to make it easier for employees and customers alike to track cremated remains as they move through the USPS network. The changes also will ensure the process remains safe and deliveries are timely."

Here are some highlights:

- Label 139, which is now available, has a vibrant orange color and comes in a larger size — 4 by 6 inches — to make it more visible to postal employees who process the shipments.
- Customers who don't use their own packaging must use the Priority Mail Express Cremated Remains box, also known as Box CRE.

Customers can also order a cremated remains mailing kit that contains a sturdy box preprinted with Label 139 on all sides (including the top and bottom), bubble cushioning, a self-sealing plastic bag, reinforced Priority Mail Tape, and a copy of Publication 139, which has been updated to include the new requirements.

The Postal Service is improving the process for customers who ship cremated remains through the mail.

The changes aim to make it easier for employees and customers alike to track cremated remains as they move through the USPS network.

The changes also will ensure the process remains safe and deliveries are timely.

Under the improved process, customers who use their own packaging must follow the guidelines for shipping cremated remains detailed in [*Publication 139, How to Package and Ship Cremated Remains*](#), and [*Publication 52, Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*](#), and affix the updated version of Label 139, Cremated Remains, to all sides of the package, including the top and bottom.

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The kit is available on the [usps.com Postal Store](https://usps.com/PostalStore).

The Postal Service will also release a "how to" YouTube video with step-by-step instructions for packaging and mailing cremated remains.



CENTRAL DISTRICT:
400 E. Jackson St.
Richmond, Virginia 23219-3694
(804) 786-3174
FAX (804) 371-8595

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Health**

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
400 E. Jackson Street
Richmond, VA 23219

TIDEWATER DISTRICT:
830 Southampton Ave., Suite 100
Norfolk, Virginia 23510
(757) 683-8366
FAX (757) 683-2589

WESTERN DISTRICT:
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Roanoke, Virginia 24019
(540) 561-6615
FAX (540) 561-6619

NORTHERN VA. DISTRICT:
10850 Pyramid Place, Suite 121
Manassas, Virginia 20110-1700
(703) 530-2600
FAX (703) 530-0510

September 18, 2019

Re: Cremation Authorization Requirements for Individuals Donated to Out-of-State Donor Programs

To Virginia Mortuary Services Partners:

Several questions have been posed to our office about the requirement for cremation authorizations when the bodies of individuals who die in Virginia are donated to out-of-state donor programs.

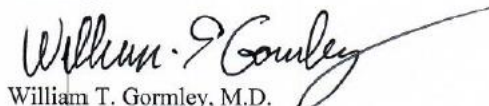
Virginia code (§ 32.1-309.3) requires authorization from the Medical Examiner for cremation of any dead body whose death occurred in Virginia. This authorization is required for any death which occurred in Virginia regardless of the location or time of the cremation.

Since the final disposition of bodies donated to out-of-state donor programs is usually cremation, Medical Examiner authorization is required for any decedent who died in Virginia.

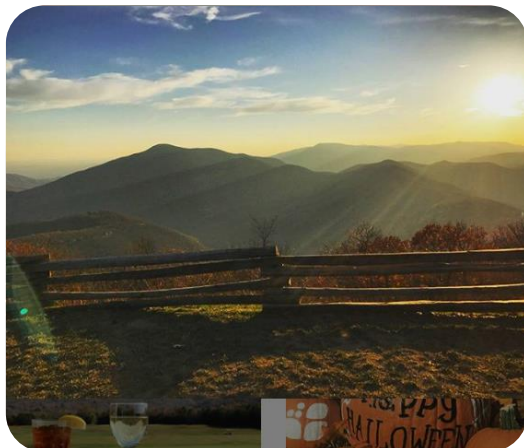
In these situations, it is the responsibility of the Funeral Home acting on behalf of the Donation Program to contact the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to arrange for cremation authorization prior to releasing or transporting the donor out of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Please contact Rick Sikon, Director of Virginia State Anatomical Program, at Rick.Sikon@vdh.virginia.gov or you may call 804-786-3174 for additional information.

Sincerely,


William T. Gormley, M.D.

IFHV FALL CONVENTION ***WINTERGREEN RESORT NOVEMBER 9-10, 2019***



Conference Highlights Include:

- ~Register On-line at www.IFHV.org
- ~1 Free Registration per IFHV Firm
- ~Hospitality Suite
- ~Breakfast, refreshment break & buffet lunch
- ~5 hours CE including laws/Regulations & Preneed, plus 1 hour of Practice Management

Hotel Room Accommodations

Single Accommodation \$129.00 per night
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Room Reservation must be made by **October 5th in order to guarantee rate.** Call 434-325-2200 and mention IFHV

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*Warfield-Rohr
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IFHV MEMBER BENEFIT WITH WARFIELD-ROHR

To show support of Virginia's independent firms and particularly IFHV members, Warfield-Rohr Casket Company just announced a special casket program just for IFHV firms. The program was reviewed and unanimously endorsed by the IFHV Board of Directors. The Warfield-Rohr Benefit

Program for IFHV Members offers member firms a quantity driven discount plan of up to a combined Terms Discount/Rebate of up to 20%. The rebate program quarters will end on November 30, February 28, May 31 and August 31 of each year.

Quantity of Caskets Purchased	Terms Discount	IFHV Member Rebate	Total Percentage Rebate	Contribution to IFHV per Casket
1 – 25	5%	6%	11%	\$2.00
26 -39	5%	9%	14%	\$2.00
40 – 59	5%	10%	15%	\$2.00
60 – 99	5%	13%	18%	\$2.00
100+	5%	15%	20%	\$2.00



Virginia Department of
Health Professions

Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers

Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers

The Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers has been made aware that some licensees of the Department of Health Professions have received fraudulent communications from individuals claiming to be from regulatory authorities, such as the Board of Pharmacy, Board of Medicine, or the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The communications, be they by e-mail, fax, phone or the US Postal Service, may threaten arrest, demand personal information, or require the payment of fines.

The Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers will not send such communications. If you believe you are the recipient of a fraudulent communication claiming to be from the Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers, you should refuse the demand and contact the Board at (804) 367-4479 or fanbd@dhp.virginia.gov.

You may also wish to report the communication to local law enforcement, the State Police, and the US Postal Service.

Information about reporting individuals purporting to be a DEA special agent is available at <https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2019/03/13/dea-warns-alarming-increase-scam-calls>.

**Every year,
we fund over
50,000 funerals,
serve over
2,800 funeral homes,
and pay out over
\$350 million for
funerals.**

We must be doing it right.

Admittedly, the stats are pretty impressive. No other insurance assignment company can boast the number of funeral homes served or the amount of money paid out yearly to make sure every funeral goes off without a hitch. But what's truly impressive is the way in which we work with our clients, as if each one is our only one. And serving them quickly and painlessly is our only job, which, in fact, is so. While bigger isn't always better, sometimes it is. As in the case of the company you want servicing your insurance assignments.



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Live Streaming Funeral Services: Unsettling or Inevitable?

Funeral Industry News, 9/22/19 <https://connectingdirectors.com>

This summer two popular media outlets — Wired and CBS News — covered the subject of live-streaming funerals. From these features, one might think that broadcasting memorial services over the internet is a new phenomenon. Turns out, many of you were very much ahead of the trend. In fact, Connecting Directors covered the topic of webcasting funeral services way back in 2009.

A 2014 article in *The Atlantic* on the subject estimated that funeral homes had been webcasting since the late 2000s. This was about the same time YouTube launched its live-streaming service and Zuckerberg introduced Facebook Live. Funeral webcasting service funeralOne has offered their service since 2002. In an industry that the public feels is generations behind in pretty much every area, this is an interesting finding.

Why webcast?- According to TribuCast, a funeral live-streaming company based in Connecticut, nine out of 10 memorial services today “have loved ones who are unable to attend.” This probably comes as no surprise given today’s mobile society. More people are moving away from the places where they grew up, leaving loved ones behind. In addition to distance limitations, some would-be attendees are home-bound due to health reasons. These are some of the same motivations that prompted churches to start live-streaming their services years ago.

Live-streaming a funeral allows anyone with access to watch a memorial service in real time. It also preserves the recording for those who were there in person to watch later. Predictably, people have mixed opinions on how webcast funerals affect the grieving process. In 2014, one expert told *The Atlantic* that webcasting makes death “more visible by bringing it quite literally into our homes.”

However, in a 2017 survey conducted in the UK by insurance provider Royal London, 49% of respondents said they would not watch a live-streamed funeral online. More than half said watching a webcast would be “insensitive or morbid,” while four in 10 “did not believe it would capture the emotions and sentiment of being there in person.” One-third felt they “wouldn’t be able to grieve or process their grief in the same way.”

Webcasting 101- NFDA president-elect R. Bryant Hightower estimated that about 20% of funeral homes offer live-streaming services today. In 2014, the NFDA introduced a group webcasting license to complement its existing music license. The NFDA webcasting license allows funeral homes to legally broadcast over the internet funeral services that include copyrighted music.

Advances in technology have made live-streaming systems easier to set up and more reliable than ever. In the past, spotty internet access, clunky cameras, and a general lack of expertise made offering webcasting more of a hassle than a benefit.

Today’s funeral homes have more options, from DIY systems to contracting with companies like FuneralOne, OneRoom, or TribuCast. These firms offer features customized for funeral home live streams, like online guest books, photographs, videos, obituaries, and more.

However, a simple setup with a well-positioned iPhone, tablet, or digital camera, accompanied by a monthly subscription to a service like Vimeo’s Livestream or DaCast will work just fine. While some businesses opt for one stationary camera in the chapel, others will set up live-streaming from any service location, including graveside. Funeral homes’ charges for live-streaming service vary, from zero to around \$300.

To share or not to share- Most funeral homes embed these broadcasts on their websites and offer families the option of making them private or public. Private live streams could require a special link or password to access the video. NFDA’s Hightower expressed concern about the privacy issues involved with watching others grieve in real time. “There is some reluctance of families to air their grief over the internet,” Hightower told CBS News. “They didn’t want to be portrayed in an unfavorable light in times of emotion, stress, and grief. Sometimes it’s unpredictable as to how they will act, so to throw it out there with the unknown of how it will unfold is unnerving.”

Parting Stone Develops New, Solidified Form of Human Remains

9/30/2019: <https://connectingdirectors.com/55281-solidified-remains>

For inventor and entrepreneur Justin Crowe, Parting Stone, a revolutionary service that transforms cremated ashes into solidified remains, is a passion project — a true labor of love.

As someone deeply connected with the death care industry, Crowe empathized with friends who passionately shared stories of a deceased family member or pet. However, more and more of these friends concluded their stories by sharing that they kept the cremated remains of these loved ones in their basements, closets, and garages. Crowe couldn't overcome that incongruity. How could something as precious as the remains of a cherished family member or pet become so utterly meaningless?

Disconnection and detachment

"People who live with cremated remains desperately want to feel a connection with them," Crowe says, "but they can't. In their hearts people want to cherish the remains of their loved ones and pets but they feel frustrated because they don't know what to do with them."

As he dug deeper into the reasons for this disconnect, Crowe discovered that the underlying issue was almost always the remains themselves. People feared spilling cremated remains, or worried about touching exposed ash. Some were afraid to look at the remains because seeing the bone fragments conjured violent images of the cremation process.

"With the huge increase in people choosing cremation for themselves or their loved ones the options for cremated remains are abundant,"

says Larry Stuart, Jr. of Cremation Strategies & Consulting. "However, many people can't make a decision and end up with a temporary container of their loved one sitting on a shelf in a closet somewhere. Some actually never pick up the cremated remains at all, leaving funeral homes and crematoria with a room full of abandoned cremated remains. Folks want permanent memorialization of their loss but, sometimes, just don't know what to do with a box of ashes. Grief is capricious and, for some, it can be hard sometimes to associate that box with a deceased loved one."

For Crowe, the answer to this complex and heartbreaking problem was to create a new form of human and animal remains. A form that wasn't messy, scary, or otherwise off-putting. A form that people could touch — even hold — as a therapeutic, healing component of a continuing relationship with the deceased. The answer was solidified remains.

Introducing Solidified Remains

Parting Stone offers families an alternative to traditional cremated remains. With Parting Stone's technology, instead of a box of ash, families can now receive a collection of clean, smooth, solid stones. Solidified remains offer the full amount of remains in a solid and clean form.

"Solidified remains are about as hard as real stones and will not disintegrate in water," explains Crowe. "Stones range from the size of your thumbnail up to the size of your palm."

Offering solidified remains in a size, heft, and texture that encourages touching, holding, and even caressing was important to Crowe.



“We designed Parting Stone solidified remains so they can be held and cherished without the typical mess and discomfort of ash,” says Crowe. “It is our hope that for the right person solidified remains can be a meaningful tool for helping continue a bond with a loved one.”

He explains that the continued bonds theory of grief inspired solidified remains. This theory questions linear models of grief that lead to conclusions like acceptance or detachment. It challenges the view of a continued bond with our departed as pathological.

“Parting Stone believes that death is the end of a life, not a relationship,” says Crowe. “We thought that the significance embodied in the essence of our loved ones could be a profound tool for continuing bonds, but we noticed that forming connections with cremated remains was rare.”

The solidification process

The journey to develop Parting Stone’s patent-pending process for solidified remains began in January 2018. The New Mexico Small Business Assistance program awarded the project a grant. These funds provided Parting Stone with the facilities and the expertise of material scientists at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Crowe explains that the Parting Stone solidification process is similar to making ceramics, but in a science lab. “When we receive the cremated remains at our lab,” he says, “we start the process by removing foreign contaminants like staples, screws, and medical implants. The ash is refined, turned into a clay-like material, a small amount of binder is added, and the stones are formed. Next, the lab fires the stones in a kiln, giving the solidified remains their hardness and permanence.”

The color of the stones are 100% natural. Many collections of stones come out white or a hue of blue or green. However, Crowe and his team often find radical variations like chocolate brown, lavender, honey, or blue speckles. Funeral Director Jody Herrington of Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland, California recently toured the Parting Stone lab in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

“After speaking with Justin for so many months about the process and what would be needed to bring the plan to life, actually being in the lab was very impressive,” shares Herrington. “Every stage of the process is clearly and thoughtfully laid out, and each individual’s remains make their way through the lab in an orderly procession. Most importantly it is clear that human remains and pet remains have their own distinct paths. Justin and his staff have worked hard ensuring that this process falls in line with our (funeral) industry standards.”

Simplified solidification shipping services

Parting Stone incorporates a streamlined shipping process. Both death care professionals and those who have unmemorialized remains in their homes can initiate an order. Orders can begin online at partingstone.com or at-need at a funeral home or crematorium.

“When we receive an order online we send the customer a collection kit with everything they need to get their ashes shipped safely to the Parting Stone lab,” explains Crowe. “The kit includes instructions, pre-paid shipping labels, and USPS-compliant cremated remains packaging.” When working with funeral homes, Parting Stone integrates with existing protocols to get the ashes shipped safely to their lab.

Families who choose solidified remains at the time of death never see the cremated ashes. They can pick up their stones when they are delivered to the funeral home. The entire solidified remains service takes about three weeks from the time ashes are received. This includes cleaning, polishing and returning the stones.

No dust or mess

The Cremation Society of Illinois has worked with Parting Stone since January 2019. Several families have already opted for solidified remains over cremated remains.

“We have had 10 to 15 families decide to have their loved ones turned into Parting Stones,” shares Don Fritz, director of operations for The Cremation Society of Illinois. “Personally I have had my 13-year-old German Shorthair and my left leg turned into Parting Stones. Families know they want their loved ones cremated, but often they are unsure of what to do with the ashes. Parting Stones are easily divided amongst family members. You can

actually walk around with a few stones in your pocket, scatter the stones, or display them in a clear vessel. The stones are clean; there is no dust or mess when handling them.”

Fritz says the company “absolutely” plans to continue their relationship with Crowe and Parting Stone. They will begin offering the option of solidified remains at all 10 Cremation Society locations starting in October. The company has also invited Crowe to speak about Parting Stone at their company meeting in November. “There has been a great deal of interest amongst our directors and counselors,” Fritz said.

Parting Stone presents unprecedented options

The solidification process uses the full amount of human or animal remains. This results in a number of stones — about 25 for a 100-pound person. Crowe has found that this makes solidified remains ideal for sharing with friends and family.

“Some people choose to carry the stones with them, and other leave them around in meaningful places,” shared Crowe. “We have been repeatedly told that our customers take their solidified remains stones to therapy.”

Parting Stone initially offered the solidification service to select retail partners, including Molecule Design Shop in Santa Fe, Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society, Regency Mortuary in Tempe, Arizona, and the Cremation Society of Illinois in Chicago. Several families who selected solidified remains have shared their gratitude with Crowe and his team. They’ve also shared their individual disposition decisions.

“The stones are wonderful,” writes Chris Linn, who chose Parting Stone’s service for her son Tom’s remains. “I love looking at them and touching them, remembering my son’s life — and, as I do, he is with me. They are beautiful — just like my son’s life and his spirit. I am about to embark on a road trip — perhaps for a year or more — and I plan to leave a stone in the beautiful spots I find. I will also share a few stones with each of his friends — so they, too, can appreciate having something to touch while they think about how Tom touched their lives.

Ashes or stones

Kris and Ron made arrangements for their son at Regency Mortuary in Tempe, Arizona. The funeral director offered the couple two options for receiving the remains, asking, “*Would you like ashes or stones?*”

“Saving someone’s ashes was something I never thought I would do, but the stones are different,” the couple shared. “We carried some of them to a stream behind his home in Valdez, Alaska, and I’m sure you can still see them in the bottom of the stream where the salmon spawn. Next month his father will hike up near Humphreys Peak in Flagstaff and leave many of the stones in the place where he loved to hike and camp. I have also given a bag to his brother and two small bags to his best friends, and I carry a very small bag in my purse. It is so very sad but it keeps his memory close to me always.”

These reactions are exactly what Crowe had hoped for when he first imagined creating an alternative to cremated remains. With Parting Stone, Crowe and his team see cremation as a “platform for healing, growth and engagement.”

Chapel of the Chimes’ Herrington agrees. She describes Parting Stone as an “unprecedented opportunity for families and loved ones to keep those they cherish close without the separation of a cold steel urn.”

Offer solidified remains to your families

Parting Stone announced their solidification technology last week and has already seen public support on social media, Albuquerque news, [MSN](#), and on [Amy Cunningham’s](#) popular blog “The Inspired Funeral.”

Parting Stone is accepting up to 50 applications from forward-thinking funeral homes who want to offer solidified remains to their communities. The company will roll out with a limited number of death care retailers in early 2020. To reserve your place in line fill out the form below.

Proposed Regulations from Periodic Review

The Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers held a Legislative/Regulatory Committee meeting on September 24, 2019 to discuss revisions to the proposed regulations from the recent periodic review. The purpose of this meeting was to review the all of Virginia's regulations pertaining to funeral service licensees so that the Board of Funeral Directors legislative/regulatory review committee could make recommendations for changes to the regulations pertaining to the profession. The committee reviewed a number of changes that included: General Price List, Preneed, Records, And More....The full board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers will meet on October 10th to review the committee's recommendations. IFHV continues to monitor these activities as your advocate. We did not receive any comments back from the membership raising any questions or concerns about the initial draft. You may view the initial draft at https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\22\29719\Agenda_DHP_29719_v1.pdf. Again, If you have any comments on the proposed actions of the Legislative/Regulatory Committee please send them to IFHV at IFHVoffice@gmail.com ASAP. We're proud to represent IFHV during these meetings. Representation and advocacy remains one of the core tenants of IFHV membership.

Thank you,
Bo Keeney and Bruce Keeney

IFHV REFERRAL PROGRAM



IFHV has a membership recruitment program that is designed to help grow the IFHV membership and reward our existing members. If you recommend a Funeral Home for IFHV Membership AND they join, then you'll receive 1 free conference registration to either the IFHV 2020 Spring Conference. Fill out the form below and return it to IFHVoffice@gmail.com or 804-643-0311 (Fax).

IFHV MEMBER NAME: _____

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Licensure Renewal Reminders

The funeral service license, funeral director license, or embalmer license shall **expire on March 31** of each calendar year. In order to renew an active funeral service, director or embalmer license, a licensee shall be required to comply with continuing competency requirements set forth in 18VAC65-20-151.

REMiNDER



Funeral service licensees, funeral directors or funeral embalmers shall be required to have completed a minimum of five hours per year of continuing education offered by a board-approved sponsor for licensure renewal in courses that emphasize the ethics, standards of practice, preneed contracts and funding, or federal or state laws and regulations governing the profession of funeral service.

One hour per year shall cover compliance with laws and regulations governing the profession, and at least one hour per year shall cover preneed funeral arrangements. The one-hour requirement on compliance with laws and regulations may be met once every two years by attendance at a meeting of the board or at a committee of the board or an informal conference or formal hearing.

Courses must be directly related to the scope of practice of funeral service. Courses for which the principal purpose is to promote, sell or offer goods, products or services to funeral homes are not acceptable for the purpose of credit toward renewal.



4461 Cox Road, Suite 110
Glen Allen, VA 23060