



## **Town of Montague Cemetery Commission Policy for Natural Burials – Highland Woods Cemetery**

1. The natural burial section of Highland Cemetery is reserved for burial that does not use a vault (partial, inverted or otherwise), concrete liner, slab, or partitioned liner.
2. No embalming is permitted during body preparation. Clothing or a shroud in which the body is wrapped is to be readily biodegradable. The Cemetery Commission reserves the right to refuse a body that is not properly prepared. Non-biodegradable objects may not be buried with the body.
3. Burial containers are to be limited to those made from biodegradable materials such as untreated softwoods, cardboard, wicker, fiber, etc.
4. Shrouded bodies must be entirely wrapped and be supported on a solid softwood board for lowering. Plywood and particle support boards are not acceptable.
5. The body of the deceased may be brought to the cemetery by a funeral director, or by family of the deceased with the proper paperwork from the Board of Health.
6. The deceased's family and friends may fill in the grave to the extent they desire, with advance notice to the Cemetery Commission.
7. A board and straps may be used to lower the body into the grave or a contracted lowering device may be used.
8. Burial depth will be 3.5 - 4 feet from the natural surface to the bottom of the grave and the grave will be mounded for settling to return to its natural state.
9. Grave markers are permitted but not required. Natural fieldstone, quarried stone or river rock may be used. Marble, granite and other impermeable rock/stone is not permitted. The grave marker must not be polished. Grave markers may not exceed approximately 18" x 18" inches and may not rest more than 3" above grade lying flat to the ground. No foundation is permitted. The Town shall not be responsible for damage to any markers.
10. No plantings, vases or potted plants are permitted. No artificial flowers or other decorations may be placed on graves. Natural wreaths and flowers are permitted provided that are rested on the ground directly in front of the marking or at the

foot of the grave if no marker is used and do not contain and packaging, decorations, ribbons or the like. The Town of Montague shall not be liable for items left at a grave, or damage to any such items to weather, vandalism theft or wear and tear.

11. The cemetery adheres to sequential burial to minimize disturbance to the land, vegetation and graves. One may pre-purchase the right to be buried, however, the actual site is not assigned until the time of need. The location of the grave is at the discretion of the Cemetery Commission. Space may be saved so that partners may be buried in adjacent plots.
12. Only one body is allowed per gravesite. One cremation burial may be included in the same gravesite as one body.
13. Non-Montague residents are permitted to be buried in Highland Woods.
14. All graves are opened and filled-in by a paid contractor, unless family members or friends of the deceased elect to fill-in the grave.
15. Gravesite size is 4 feet x 8 feet.
16. This policy shall supersede all provisions of the Rules and Regulations of the Montague Cemetery Commission only with respect to so-called "Green Burials" or "Natural Burials". All other provisions of said Rules and Regulations shall apply in the Highland Woods Cemetery to the extent that they are not inconsistent with this Policy.