



Aberdeen Crematorium - Instruction to Funeral Directors

Construction of the coffin. The coffin must be made of a suitable material which, when placed in a cremator and subjected to the cremation process, is easily combustible and which does not emit smoke, give off toxic gas or leave any retardant smears or drips after final combustion. No metal of any kind shall be used in the manufacture of such coffin except as necessary for its safe construction and then only metal of a high ferrous content. Cross pieces must not be attached to the bottom of the coffin. If it is desired to strengthen the bottom of the coffin, wooden strips may be placed lengthways for this purpose. Cardboard coffins should not contain chlorine in the wet strength agent. (e.g. not using polyamidoamine-epichlorhydrin based resin (PAA-E). Contact should be made with the Crematorium Administration to ensure that the coffin selected is fit for the purpose of cremation.

Coffin Furniture and Fittings. No metal furniture or fittings whatever shall be used on a coffin for cremation. Coffin handles should be free from unnecessary metal components. External coatings to a coffin must allow for smokeless combustion and the use of nitro-cellulose varnish, polyurethane, melamine and any products containing polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or melamine must not be used in coffin construction or furnishings. Water based lacquer free from additives containing heavy metals may be used for coating a coffin or a suitable cloth may be used for covering a coffin. The exception to the foregoing is the use of polystyrene which is restricted to the coffin nameplate only and this must not exceed 90 grams in weight.

Lining of the coffin. The use of sawdust, cotton wool or shredded paper within a coffin must be avoided. If lining of a coffin is necessary, this should be manufactured from polythene not exceeding 75 microns in thickness. Lead or zinc linings must not be used. The use of shredded paper within a coffin is not permitted.

Clothing and Coffin Content. In order to minimise the release of pollutants to air, it is recommended that clothing should be of natural fibres and that shoes or any material manufactured from PVC should not be included. Body adornments manufactured from copper should be removed as should any easily removable prostheses or casts of plaster or other material. Additional items, particularly of glass or plastic, should not be placed within the coffin.

Size of the coffin. Coffin dimensions must not exceed **length 86 inches (2185 mm): width 40 inches (1015 mm): depth 27 inches (685 mm).**

Coffin Weight: Combined weight of coffin and contents must not exceed **39.5 Stones (250kg).**

The current procedures for baby and infant cremations at Aberdeen Crematorium including the prospects of ashes being recovered are available from Aberdeen City Council. Mothers and/or families of infants considering cremation should be advised of the above and reminded of the availability of the option of burial.