

WHAT IS GREEN BURIAL?

Green Burial is an environmentally sensitive practice where the body is returned to the earth to decompose naturally and contribute to environmental renewal. It's a spiritually fulfilling alternative to conventional burial, especially for people who are mindful of the cyclical nature of life. This form of burial has been practiced since the dawn of human civilization.

A body is prepared for Green Burial without embalming and buried in a biodegradable shroud, simple container or casket made from natural fibre, wicker or sustainably harvested wood.

Aurora Gardens at Northern Lights Cemetery is Edmonton Municipal Cemeteries' first green burial area. Green Burial is a statement of personal values for those who seek to minimize their impact on the local and global environment.

PRICE COMPARISON

	Green Burial	Traditional Plot
Plot	\$ 3000	\$ 3000
Std. Open / Close	\$ 1650 (includes shrubs/trees and landscaping)	\$ 1225
Liner (or vault)	Not required	\$ 1000 (or Vault purchased through Funeral Home)
Memorialization	\$ 621.50 (engraving on communal marker)	\$ 2000+ (depending on the area and marker selected)
TOTAL	\$ 5271.50	\$ 7225.00+

REMEMBRANCE

Communal memorial stones have been placed in various locations throughout the Aurora Gardens. They have room for simple inscriptions to record the names of the persons buried in the area nearest each boulder location.

As Aurora Gardens become fully utilized and the memorial plantings mature, a walking path will be created that meanders through the garden, connecting all the memorial stones.

PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE

Native planting material will be planted and Aurora Gardens will evolve into a woodlands type area with communal memorial stones to commemorate our departed loved ones.

To create a diverse, balanced mix of plantings in the woodlands, all planting activities are carried out according to an established planting plan with typical native tree, shrubs, wildflowers, and groundcover species found in the Northern Alberta region.

Tree, shrub and wildflower planting is done seasonally following a burial. Trees will be planted with sufficient room for them to grow and create a healthy tree and contribute to the natural canopy for wildlife movement, forage and habitation.

HOW IT WORKS

You can pre-purchase your green burial plot and services, however, Aurora Gardens plots are arranged to be used sequentially in a manner that works with the natural character and terrain of the site. This means that the specific plot is assigned by the City of Edmonton only when a death has occurred and according to the sequential use plan. Families will be provided GPS coordinates of the plot location at the time the burial ceremony is scheduled to place.

For every burial, a permanent record of all pertinent details, including the precise location, is created and this record is maintained, as required by law, in perpetuity at the Cemetery office.

On recent graves, leaf mulch or natural wood chips are used to suppress grass, invasive plant species and weeds from establishing themselves before the memorial plantings are made. This cover contributes organic material to the soil and eventually breaks down.

The goal is to always maintain Aurora Gardens areas in as natural a state as possible; it is nonetheless necessary for the site to be managed and kept accessible, especially during the operational phase.

Groundcover will be trimmed from time to time and weed control will be carried out periodically to ensure that trees and plantings can flourish.

Customers are requested to walk only on the paths in areas a burial/interment has taken place to avoid disturbing the plant life and avoid concerns of uneven grounds and to pay respect to those that have been departed.

When fully utilized, access into Aurora Gardens will be along a walking path. A few small clearings with seating will be maintained for visiting and quiet contemplation in a secluded setting.

FUNERAL SERVICES

Selecting a funeral service provider is a decision by families and is usually based on personal criteria/needs. There are a few Edmonton-based funeral homes that offer green burial services. The following Funeral Homes have indicated to us that they provide Green Burial Services. This list is not prioritized, non-exhaustive and sorted alphabetically:

- Connelly-McKinley Funeral Homes (<https://www.connelly-mckinley.com/>)
- Fountain Garden Funeral Service Inc. (<http://fgmemorial.ca/>)
- Serenity Funeral Service (<https://serenity.ca/>)
- Sturgeon Memorial Inc. (<http://smemorial.ca/>)
- Trinity Funeral Home (<https://www.trinityfuneralhome.ca/>)
- Pine Box Funerals Inc. (<https://www.pineboxfunerals.ca/>)