

Flower and Ornament Policy

It is the policy of Canberra Cemeteries that all materials that pose a potential risk or danger to visitors or staff will be removed from graves, especially in lawn areas which constitute the highest level of risk.

Tributes are those items left after burial by mourners, family and friends to honour the deceased and to help with the process of grief and healing. Cemeteries everywhere do their best to balance desire to accommodate the needs of mourners and visitors against the requirement to provide safe and high quality, beautiful burial spaces for visitors and staff.

In addition to the removal of prohibited items, sometimes things go missing – birds and other animals regularly damage or relocate items. Exclusive Right Holders of graves also have a legal right to remove anything from a grave.

In any situation, it may be distressing for those who have left tributes to find they are damaged or not there anymore.

What items are not allowed on graves?

In practice, the policy means that anything which may over time become a hazard may not be left on graves. Objects which at face value appear safe, may be broken or knocked onto the lawn and come into contact with people, lawn mowers and other machinery creating very dangerous situations.

Examples of materials that are prohibited include objects made of glass, crockery or metal.

Specifically: Glass jars, vases, figurines, terra cotta pots, metal toys (small and large), bottles of alcohol, some types of synthetic flowers and other paraphernalia such as windmills which contain wire.

What items may be problematic?

Some examples include: soft toys which rot after becoming wet; synthetic flowers which blow away in strong winds; flower arrangements in rigid plastic pots (from florists).

Remember that cemeteries are public places – we recommend that items with sentimental or monetary value are not left as tributes.

What happens to materials that are not allowed?

Broken or damaged items that are not allowed may be placed in rubbish bins by staff during regular maintenance.

Disallowed or problematic items may be removed and stored at the works depots at Gungahlin Cemetery and Woden Cemetery for at approximately three months, after which they may be disposed of.

If you believe that a tribute is missing please enquire at the office – it may be in storage and may be viewed [by appointment](#).

What Items are allowed?

Fresh Flowers – note that these may be removed when they start to decompose and are often eaten by animals.

In general, small items made from soft plastic, synthetic flowers made from cloth or plastic are acceptable.

In lawn areas, a single small pot plant (in a plastic pot) per grave – note that dead plants may be removed.

Please use the vases provided by Canberra Cemeteries.

If in doubt please ask –we want everyone to feel that this policy is fair, so if you have a question please contact us, either by email, phone or at the cemetery office during business hours.

Keeping our cemeteries safe and tidy is a big task and one that we can't do without your assistance.

We respectfully ask that visitors think carefully before leaving tributes.

*The Exclusive Rights Holder of the Allotment is the person(s) who completes the Application for Exclusive Right of Allotment form prior to the burial occurring or at the time of the allotment purchase. They become the sole authority on any future matters regarding the allotment, including burials and memorialisation.

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