

Bay Area Funeral Society
P.O. Box 264
Berkeley, CA 94701

(510) 841-6653
info@bafsweb.org
<http://www.bafsweb.org>

2010 Cemetery Survey

Currently Includes the Following Cemeteries:

- Alhambra Cemetery. Martinez Cemetery Commission, 525 Henrietta St., Martinez, CA 94553. (925)372-3551
- Byron-Brentwood-Knighten Union Cemetery. P.O. Box 551 Brentwood, CA 94513. (925)634-4748
- The Columbarium. Grace Cathedral, 1100 California St., San Francisco, CA 94108. (415)749-6309
- Evergreen Cemetery. 6450 Camden Street, Oakland, CA 94605. (510)632-1602
- Lone Tree Cemetery. 24591 Fairview Ave., Hayward, CA 94542. (510)582-1274
- Memory Gardens Cemetery. Memory Gardens Cemetery, 3873 East Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550-4828. (925)447-8417
- Neptune Society Columbarium. 1 Loraine Court, San Francisco, CA 94118
- Rolling Hills Memorial Park, 4100 Hilltop Dr., El Sobrante, CA 94803. (510)223-6161
- Saint Augustine's Catholic Cemetery. 3999 Bernal Avenue, P.O. Box 817, Pleasanton, CA 94566
- St. Joseph Cemetery. 2540 Church Lane, San Pablo, CA 94806. (510)234-2012

Check back for updates.

The Purpose of this Survey:

Every year, numerous families contact The Bay Area Funeral Society (BAFS) seeking information about cemeteries and columbariums. Some are looking for affordable plots or niches, others are interested in green burial, and all of them would like to know more about the products and services that their local cemeteries provide. To address these questions, BAFS has conducted a study of cemeteries and columbariums in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco counties.

The Bay Area Funeral Society is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to protecting a consumer's right to choose a meaningful, dignified, and affordable funeral. Through our website, literature, and presentations, we provide information about “traditional,” economical, green, and home funerals.

How the survey was conducted:

To identify cemeteries and columbariums in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco counties, we consulted phone books, various genealogical resources, and the California State Cemetery and Funeral Bureau website. Next, we mailed and/or called these cemeteries/columbariums and asked them to complete the survey. Lastly, we listed them in alphabetical order and entered their responses into an easy-to-read spreadsheet.

How to interpret the survey:

Placing cemeteries’ responses side by side, the survey allows you to compare them on a variety of fronts, including price, burial restrictions, environmental-friendliness, etc. Some cemeteries have chapels, crematoriums, funeral homes, and/or scattering gardens. They sell caskets, flowers, monuments, vaults and liners. In the survey, each of these products and services is identified by an abbreviation and listed beside the heading “Amenities.” The abbreviations and their meanings are displayed in the “Key” below. Each numbered heading on the left corresponds to a numbered question which can be found at the end of this document. Most of the questions are straight-forward, and there are explanations for those that are not. **This survey is very much a work in progress. Some of the responses require follow-up, and we are still waiting for results from over 20 cemeteries, so please check back for updates.**

Key:

Amenities: Chapel (Ch), Crematory (Cr), Caskets (Ca), Funeral Home (FH), Flowers (Fl), Monuments (M), Vaults and liners (VL), Scattering Garden (S), Ossuary (O).

Final Words:

We have tried to make this survey as precise as possible. If you discover an error, please contact us and we would be more than happy to correct it. This survey is intended to provide an overview of interment options in the Bay Area and is not intended to replace consultations with providers. BAFS does not guarantee the accuracy of any of the information contained in this document.

Cemetery/Columbarium	Alhambra Cemetery Martinez Cemetery Commission 525 Henrietta St. Martinez, CA 94553 (925)372-3551	Byron-Brentwood- Knighten Union Cemetery P.O. Box 551 Brentwood, CA 94513 (925)634-4748	The Columbarium Grace Cathedral 1100 California St. San Francisco, CA 94108 (415)749-6309	Evergreen Cemetery 6450 Camden Street Oakland, CA 94605 (510)632-1602	Lone Tree Cemetery 24591 Fairview Ave. Hayward, CA 94542 (510)582-1274
1. Lowest Cost Single Grave	Cemetery is closed to outside burials. Family must have a deed for the plot before a decedent can be buried.	\$1,375	\$8,000 and \$6,000, according to location. Memorial spaces are available for \$2,000. Price includes bronze urn, bronze plaque mounted on oak cabinet, entry of name/dates in Book of Remembrance, committal service in Chapel of St. Francis.	\$8,462.13. Price includes plot, opening and closing fees, endowment care, and liner.	\$1,550
2. Opening/Closing a Grave	-		-	-	
3. Opening/Closing a Niche	-		-	-	
4. Vault Liner Price	-		-	-	

Range					
5. Endowment Care	-		50% of price	\$600	
6. Require vaults or liners in all sections?	-	Yes/Yes	-	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
7. Amenities	-	O, VL	Ch	S, Ch, Cr, M, VL	S, Ch, M, VL
8. Shrouds, Cardboard Boxes Acceptable?	-	Cardboard: Yes Shrouds: No Must have a ring liner (liner with no bottom)	-	Yes	Yes (Muslims only)
9. Green Section	-	No	-	No	No
10. Home Funerals Acceptable?	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
11. Special Sections	There are certain areas with higher concentrations of children; the poor ("Potter's Field").	No	No	No	Veterans, babies, Muslims, Ethiopian
12. Restrictions	Cemetery is closed to outside burials. Family must have a deed for the plot before a decedent can be buried.	Restricted to families living inside the district's boundaries. Relatives who qualify are charged out-of-district fee.	No	No	No
13. Languages	English, Spanish	English, limited Spanish	English, Spanish, some other European languages	English, Spanish	English
14. Discounts	-	No	Discounts for members of the cathedral congregation and to the Episcopal clergy.	No	Yes
15. Miscellaneous Info	Alhambra Cemetery is a historical site with sweeping views of the Carquinez Strait. The city has some	-	-	Limited to no space available at this time. Established in 1903.	-

	<p>information on folks buried in the cemetery and is always happy to assist family genealogists. Contact the Recreation Office at 925-372-3510.</p> <p>The gates of the cemetery are locked. To get a key, visitors need to stop by City Hall, 525 Henrietta St., Martinez, 94553. During the week, they can pick up a key from the Recreation Office or the Police Dept. On the weekends, they should go to the Police Dept. You can take a virtual tour of the Alhambra Cemetery at www.martinezhistory.org/html/cemetery_tour.html</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

Cemetery/Columbarium	Memory Gardens Cemetery 3873 East Avenue Livermore, CA 94550-4828 (925)447-8417	Neptune Society Columbarium 1 Loraine Court San Francisco, CA 94118 (415)771-0717	Rolling Hills Memorial Park 4100 Hilltop Dr. El Sobrante, CA 94803 (510)223-6161	Saint Augustine's Catholic Cemetery 3999 Bernal Avenue P.O. Box 817 Pleasanton, CA 94566	St. Joseph Cemetery 2540 Church Lane San Pablo, CA 94806 (510)234-2012
1. Lowest Cost Single Grave	\$3,688. Includes endowment, recording, opening, closing, vault/liner.	-	\$3,200. \$4,000 with endowment, recording, opening/closing, vault/liner fees.	-	\$5,350. Includes vault, endowment care, and recordation fee.
2. Opening/Closing a Grave	\$400 opening and closing together	-			
3. Opening/Closing a Niche	\$150/\$200	\$295 or \$500, depending on size and location			
4. Vault/Liner Price Range	\$120-\$500	-			
5. Endowment Care	\$40-\$150	\$100 per niche			
6. Require vaults or liners in all sections?	Yes	-	Yes. Muslims can use a liner with no bottom.	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
7. Amenities	M, VL	FH, Ch, Cr (but not on site)	S, Cr, M, VL	Ch, VL	FH, Ch, Cr, Fl, M, Ca, VL
8. Shrouds, Cardboard Boxes Acceptable?	No	-	Yes	-	No
9. Green Section	Yes	-	No	Yes	No
10. Home Funerals Acceptable?	Yes	-	Yes	-	No
11. Special Sections	Yes. Veterans, Babies, Jewish, Greek, Catholic, etc.	-	Yes	Babies/Children	Babies
12. Restrictions	No	-	No	Restricted to Catholics	No
13. Languages	English	-	Spanish, Asian languages	English, Spanish	English, Spanish, Tagalog, Korean, Japanese
14. Discounts	Independent Order of Odd Fellows,	-	No	No	Discounts for Oakland Diocese

	10% discount				employees
15. Miscellaneous Info			Gives presentations to interested groups. Can arrange to watch cremation process.	-	Cemetery was totally renovated 2 years ago with new offices and new mortuary chapels.

Survey Questions and Explanations

1. What is the lowest price for a single, unmarked grave without endowment, recording, opening, closing, or vault/liner fees? At many cemeteries, some of these fees are built into the base price. If this is the case, please indicate "includes vault" or "includes _____."

Explanation: This question refers to the cost of the right to bury someone in a single plot, before adding on the cost of the vault, opening and closing the grave, etc. Some cemeteries already have a vault installed, so you can't avoid paying for it, and it is built into the cost of the grave. If this is the case, indicate "includes vault."
2. What is the cost of opening a grave? _____; Closing a grave? _____
3. What is the cost of opening a niche? _____; Closing a niche? _____
4. What is the range of prices for vaults? From _____ to _____.

What is the range of prices for liners? From _____ to _____.

5. How much is endowment care? Is it a percentage of the plot cost or a flat fee?

Explanation: Endowment care is the cost of maintaining the grave—mowing the lawn, etc.

6. Do you require a vault or liner in all sections of your cemetery? Is one or the other required for buried urns?

Explanation: California law does not require vaults or liners, but many cemeteries do because they prevent the ground from sinking, thereby making lawn maintenance easier.

7. What services do you provide? Please check all that apply:

Is there a scattering garden? ___ yes; ___ no.

Does your facility include a funeral home? ___ yes; ___ no.

Is there a chapel? ___ yes; ___ no.

Do you have a crematory? ___ yes; ___ no.

Do you sell flowers? ___ yes; ___ no.

Monuments? ___ yes; ___ no.

Caskets? ___ yes; ___ no.

Vaults and liners? ___ yes; ___ no.

If you offer other services, please specify below:

8. Do you allow decedents to be buried in shrouds or cardboard boxes (“alternative containers”)?

Explanation: Shroud burial appeals to a variety of religious groups, but it can be difficult to allow a cemetery that allows it. “Alternative Containers” are cardboard boxes with wood supports that are usually used for cremation. However, there is no obvious reason why they couldn’t be buried in a cemetery.

9. Do you have a green burial section? If yes, how many acres is it? If not, are there future plans for such a section?

Explanation: In a green burial section, bodies would be buried without a liner or vault. They would be unembalmed, wrapped in a shroud, or placed in a biodegradable casket. Grave markers would be rocks, bushes, trees, etc.

10. There seems to be a growing interest in home funerals. If a family brings in a body for cremation or burial and their paper work is in order, will you accommodate them?

Explanation: With a home funeral, mortuary involvement is kept to a minimum. Families wash and dress the deceased, hold visitation services in the home, acquire the death certificate and burial permit, and transport the body to the cemetery or crematory. There is an increasing interest in this kind of funeral.

11. Do you have special sections? If so, please specify what they are. For example, veterans, babies, Jewish, Greek, Catholic, etc.

12. Are there restrictions on who can be buried in your cemetery? (For example, restrictions related to religion, ethnicity, or residency, etc.) If there are no restrictions, do you apply discounts or extra fees to particular groups?

Explanation: Some cemeteries are not open to the public. If there are *any* restrictions on who they accept, list them.

13. What languages can your staff accommodate?

14. Do you have discounts for city residents, needy persons, vets, others?