

Mourning Ventures of Maine

Disposition Terminology - “Our Final Resting Place”

A few things to consider about how your body is handled after death.

There are many ways to lay a body to rest. These terms explain common burial, cremation, and alternative practices, so you can better understand your choices and share your preferences.

-  **Disposition**
 - The handling and “final resting place” of a deceased person’s remains
-  **Interment**
 - General term for placing remains in their final resting place
-  **Direct Disposition**
 - Burial or cremation without a viewing or service, sometimes using a simple container instead of a casket
-  **Embalming**
 - The temporary preservation of a body using chemicals to slow decomposition
-  **Ground/Earth Burial**
 - The body is placed in a casket and buried in a cemetery; usually embalmed
-  **Green/Natural Burial**
 - An environmentally friendly burial without embalming, vault, or metal casket—allowing the body to return naturally to the earth
-  **Above Ground Burial (Entombment)**
 - The body is placed in a crypt or sarcophagus within a mausoleum
-  **Natural Organic Reduction (Human Composting)**
 - The process of transforming human remains into nutrient-rich soil through the controlled decomposition of a body
-  **Sea Burial**
 - Burial at sea, following environmental and legal guidelines
-  **Cremation**
 - Uses heat and flame to reduce the body to bone fragments, later processed into ashes (cremated remains/ cremains)
-  **Crematory (Crematorium)**
 - The facility where cremation takes place
-  **Alkaline Hydrolysis (Water Cremation)**
 - A water-based process that gently reduces the body to bone fragments, returned as ashes (hydrolyzed remains)
-  **Urn**
 - A container designed to hold cremated or hydrolyzed remains
-  **Columbarium**
 - A structure or wall with niches where urns are placed
-  **Mausoleum**
 - A building that houses caskets or remains, either for a family or a community
-  **Alternative Container**
 - A simple, usually combustible container used in place of a casket for cremation or burial
-  **Scattering**
 - Releasing cremated remains into the wind or water, or by burying them in the earth
 - May take place in a designated landscaped area for scattering or memorializing cremated remains
-  **Prepaid Burial Plan**
 - An arrangement paid in advance to cover funeral or burial costs, potentially easing financial burden on loved ones



 **Note:**
These definitions are for general education. For legal or medical guidance, consult the appropriate professional provider.

