

It is our intent to provide you with the information to make an informed decision based on your personal preferences. As a non-profit Catholic cemetery, after expenses, all proceeds from the sale of all products and services purchased from Gethsemane Cemetery get re-invested back into the cemetery to provide for its maintenance and lasting care.

We are providing this information in order for you the family to make an informed decision on your own. We make no claim as to the particular use, suitability or quality of any brand, supplier or manufacturer, and you may purchase your vault or liner from whomever you choose. Gethsemane Cemetery does not charge "handling" or "inspection fees" if you purchase your vault from an outside supplier.

¹Information provided by the National Concrete Burial Vault Association website as of 07/14/2008



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What we are about...

Catholic Cemeteries are places of prayerful remembrance and profound expectation of future glory. They are an important part of our Catholic funeral rites and traditions. For a Catholic, burial in a Catholic cemetery is a final act of faith. An expression of our shared belief, it reflects the spirit of community between the faithful living and deceased, and reaffirms our belief in the final resurrection. It is imperative that we preserve those traditions for future generations.

Our Mission is

To bury the dead, comfort the sorrowful and pray for the living and the dead.

To offer our families choice and flexibility, coupled with unmatched service and care within a well maintained landscape, while preserving the dignity and identity of the Catholic Cemetery.

To deny no person a proper and dignified burial, regardless of their means.



A Tradition of Trust Since 1895.

Burial Vaults and Liners



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While there is no state law that requires the use of burial vaults or liners, Gethsemane Cemetery, as well as most cemeteries, requires the use of a concrete burial vault or liner for all traditional interments and a concrete, stone or plastic vault or liner for all cremation interments.

Gethsemane Cemetery first began using 6 piece sectional vaults, made from slate and later from concrete, in the early 1900's to prevent the earth from collapsing underneath persons or equipment in the event of a casket failure. Around 1928, 2 piece concrete vaults were being tried and by the mid 1930's the use of sectional vaults became a thing of the past. To this day the possibility of the earth collapsing from a burial made years ago without a vault remains, and reminds us of the safety provided by such a product.

There are numerous loads placed on the burial vault, such as static, dynamic and impact.

A static or stationary load is simply the weight of the earth that rests directly over a burial vault. This load has decreased since the 1920s. In most cemeteries today, the average grave has 18 inches of earth covering, which results in a static load of approximately 4,000 pounds (two tons).¹



A dynamic load is a load that varies in intensity. This load is transferred to a burial vault as heavy cemetery equipment passes over the grave. The equipment used in cemeteries is much larger and heavier today. Some cemeteries use a backhoe, which weighs close to 25,000 pounds on average.¹

An impact or shock load is produced by a mechanical tamper or the dropping of a backhoe bucket, and delivers a very concentrated force through the soil. This has an extreme effect on a small area of the burial vault cover at shallow grave depths.¹

Concrete vaults not only offer a measure of safety, they may also help to retain the integrity of the casket, as well as keep the earth from settling which assists the cemetery in its maintenance operations and helps to maintain a lasting beauty that would not be possible otherwise. The same principle holds true for the burial of cremated remains. While not as large as a traditional interment, the collapse of a grave used for cremation can have maintenance and safety concerns as well. The fact that there are numerous cremation interments in a relatively small area increases the impact on safety and appearance if vaults were not used.

While burial of the body or cremated remains should always be considered permanent, there are occasions when disinterment becomes necessary. The use of a burial vault when the interment was made can help ensure dignity during this process.

The National Concrete Burial Vault Association provides a definition for both concrete vaults and liners. According to their website, a Concrete Graveliner is "A burial receptacle placed in the ground in a cemetery, either sectional, dome or box form designed and built to support the weight of the earth and standard cemetery maintenance equipment and to prevent the grave from collapsing.", and a Concrete Burial Vault is "A lined and sealed burial receptacle which performs all the functions of the concrete graveliner, and in addition is designed and constructed using one or more lining and sealing materials to increase the overall tensile strength of the finished unit and to reduce the risk of intrusion of exterior elements."

Sometimes, vaults and liners are installed in the interment space prior to the interment, the earth and lid is removed to make the interment and then replaced to complete the process. Concrete becomes stronger as it continues to cure after being placed in the ground; so a vault properly buried years ago could actually be stronger today.¹

