

SECTION: Public Works		POLICY #: PW-002
Date Approved: December 21, 2015		Winter Interment Procedures
Revision Date:	Review Date:	
Authority: 11.19.15 Cemetery Minutes		

PURPOSE

This procedure is designed to ensure winter interments are completed in a safe and efficient manner. Circumstances where the cemetery owner (Town of Hanover) may refuse to complete interments in the winter are also clarified.

SCOPE

This procedure shall cover all Town of Hanover staff engaged in completing or supervising winter interments. All other parties associated with the operation of the Hanover Cemetery shall also abide by this procedure, i.e., Hanover Cemetery Board, funeral directors, etc.

Personal Protective Equipment Required

At a minimum, PPE to be worn and available, includes; hard hat, safety boots, safety vest or high visibility safety clothing, work gloves, ear and eye protection, and warm, breathable clothing.

Tools and Equipment Required

Winter interments require additional tools and equipment to ensure work is completed in a safe and efficient manner. At a minimum, the tools and equipment to be used and/or available, include; sod cutter, cement saw, snow removal equipment including walk behind and driven snow blowers, non-slip slings or lifting devices, snow shovels, long handled spades, truck/trailer, backhoe with qualified operator, and non-slip ground leveling materials.

PROCEDURE

As per section 7.4.2.1 of the Town of Hanover's Cemetery By-law, all winter interments will be performed as weather conditions allow. In addition, winter interments shall only be completed if it is determined to be safe for the workers preparing the site and people attending the committal services, and the risk of damage to monuments and other property can be minimized. Whether winter interments can be completed safely and without risk of damage shall be at the discretion of the cemetery attendant in consultation with the Public Works Foreman. Conditions that generally suggest winter interments cannot be completed safely and efficiently include the following:

- When frost exceeds 30 cm in depth;
- When ice and/or snow cover at the site of the burial exceeds one metre in depth;
- The site of the burial is so tight in terms of space so as not to allow access by a backhoe with its stabilizers to be fully extended, and a safe working area for staff;
- Where monuments are frozen to their base such that attempting to free them poses a risk of damage;
- Conditions are such that visibility makes working hazardous; and
- When cemetery attendants, other qualified staff, or backhoe owners/operators are not available to prepare the site.

Pre-Digging Setup of Interment

- Interments shall be scheduled with the Town of Hanover with a minimum of 24 business hours of notice. If any of the conditions outlined above exist, in consultation with the cemetery attendant and/or Public Works Foreman, the person requesting the interment shall be notified immediately that *“due to xxxxx, the Town cannot perform the requested interment safely and efficiently at this time.”*
- The location of the interment shall be delineated and a plan for determining the best loading and unloading path shall be determined.
- All memorials potentially in the way of the backhoe, snow blowers, trucks, path for procession, shall be removed if it is safe to do so and without the risk of damage.
- A path and work area large enough to allow a backhoe to be positioned close to the site with its stabilizers fully extended as well as for personnel to remain a safe distance away from the backhoe shall be cleared.
- In all conditions, fully extended stabilizers are to be utilized on the backhoe. The area where the backhoe is positioned must be level with the front and rear tires clear off the ground by approximately six inches. The backhoe stabilizers should be positioned on the most stable platform possible so as to reduce the chance of the equipment sliding in any direction. If possible, a non-slip material shall be placed below the stabilizers to reduce the risk of the backhoe sliding.
- Once an appropriate area is cleared of snow, memorials and other obstacles, and the backhoe has been safely positioned, workers shall delineate the area to be excavated by locating the markers on each plot and measuring the area to be excavated. If the ground is frozen, a cement saw shall be used to cut the area to assist the backhoe with breaking through the ground. If the backhoe has a pick attachment, that will be used to break through the ice and/or frost in place of a bucket.
- PPE must be worn while in the vicinity of the backhoe. All staff must be aware of the danger the backhoe presents and communicate their location to the operator. The operator must be aware of any potential hazards at all times (ground conditions, people, equipment, memorials or other). When other staff are in the area of moving equipment, the backhoe operator should have hands away from controls.
- Complete the Plot excavation as per usual procedures.
- The sod will be unusable when it thaws, so it should be discarded.
- When excavation is finished and stable, all machinery should be removed.
- Post-Digging Setup shall be completed at per usual procedures.
- Post Service Interment shall be completed as per usual procedures.