

# LAST WISHES

## Carpenter Creek Last Wishes Society

Last Wishes is a non-denominational volunteer community society. It was formed to provide information about different types of funeral arrangements. This knowledge enables an individual or family to make informed choices in planning for burial or cremation.

Funerals are commonly provided by commercial funeral companies. However it is legal in BC for the family to plan and carry out private funeral arrangements.

Because a death in the family is exceedingly stressful, Last Wishes encourages pre-planning. With pre-planning in place, decisions regarding the disposal of the body of the deceased will have been considered and documented by the time of death.

***We do not provide funeral services.***

***We do*** provide information so that families may arrange their own, private, non commercial funerals.

## MEMBERSHIP

Families or individuals may join for a one-time fee of \$20.

This provides:

Information on alternatives for private or commercial funeral arrangements.

Assistance with pre-planning and recording of wishes.

Access to Last Wishes support, if wanted, when a death occurs.

Information seminars.

Advocacy for future educational and public awareness programs.

## AT THE TIME of DEATH

### When death is expected:

1. Check to see if any preplanning has been done
2. Initiate arrangements to fulfill the dying person's requests, for example, coffin building
3. Make a list of who to call when death occurs. This may include:
  - Physician, Home Care Nurse, other medical attendant
  - Family member or friend with planned phone tree
  - Spiritual advisor if desired
  - Funeral Provider or Last Wishes Society
  - Hospice, 358 7828

### When expected death occurs:

1. DO NOT CALL 911
2. There is no rush to do anything, and no legal requirement to move the body quickly
3. Make the phone calls as appropriate
4. The person who has died will have to be officially 'pronounced' deceased by a medical attendant
5. To assist the grieving process, review how the death occurred, and encourage expression of feelings.
6. An important step in the grieving process is spending time with the body
7. It is very important to explain what is happening to children.
8. Make sure that any remaining medication is safely put away until it can be disposed of. It can be given to the medical attendant or a pharmacy for safe disposal.

### In case of UNEXPECTED death:

**CALL 911** and ask for the ambulance. They will arrange the appropriate service to come, depending on who is available in the area. This may be ambulance attendants or other first responders trained to assess vital signs. They are mandated to start CPR, unless a Do Not Resuscitate request, or a Living Will signed by the person who has died, is available. The Coroner is notified in all cases of unexpected death.

# TASKS WHICH NEED TO BE ACCOMPLISHED AT THE TIME OF DEATH

## Tasks Checklist:

1. Family Meeting for Planning.
2. Completion of forms needed immediately, see below.
3. Book burial or cremation.
4. Order coffin.
5. Assess transportation requirements.
6. Plan laying out of body.
7. Arrange viewing of body.
8. Make service arrangements.
9. If cremation is chosen, arrange disposition of ashes.
10. Send obituary to newspaper.

## DETAILS OF TASKS AT THE TIME OF DEATH

*Depending on the circumstances of death, each set of activities will be slightly different.*

### 1. Family meeting.

This is to initiate communication between a Last Wishes representative and family member or friend responsible for making burial arrangements. If the death is expected, this meeting could take place before the death occurs, and may include the person who is dying.

### 2. Completion of Forms

Three BC Government official forms are time related and must be obtained, filled out and faxed **as soon as possible** after the death has occurred.

**a. Registration of Death** forms are numbered by the BC Government. They can be obtained by phoning 250-712-7595. Have a local fax number ready for forms to be sent to you.

**b. Medical Certificate of Death** The completed form is obtained from the attending physician.

***a and b must be faxed together to 250-712-7598. A Burial Permit will be faxed back in a few hours; until this is received, the body may not be moved.***

**c. Private Transfer Permit Application** This form is required **as well as** the Burial Permit, because a commercial funeral provider is not involved. The LWS will likely have a copy available; if not, phone 250-265-4865. The application form must be filled out and faxed before moving the body, and can be started in anticipation of the death.

### **3. BOOK BURIAL OR CREMATION**

**BURIALS** are legally required to take place in a designated cemetery. The New Denver Cemetery is run by the Village of New Denver. Burials need to be booked through the village office at 250 358 2316. Two village employees are required to do the 'opening and closing' of the grave (digging and filling in). Burial usually takes place within 72 hours of death. If the time is longer sanitation issues may require embalming, which is only carried out by a commercial funeral provider.

**CREMATION** cannot take place prior to 48 hours after death. It must be done in a designated crematorium, arranged through a commercial funeral provider. Prior to cremation, pacemakers have to be removed; this is usually done by the attending physician.

#### **PLANNED HOME DEATH**

The body of the deceased may be kept in the home until burial or cremation. If the death occurs in a facility, the staff need to know as soon as possible what the funeral arrangements will be.

**UNEXPECTED DEATH** The Coroner will be responsible for assessing the cause of death, and also must be informed about funeral arrangements. An autopsy (medical examination of the body to determine the cause of death) may be required.

### **4. ORDER COFFIN**

A 'rigid, combustible, leak-proof closed container' (coffin or casket) is required for either burial or cremation. This can be made locally from any kind of wood, including particle board or plywood. The LWS will provide names of local woodworkers who keep materials at hand. If it is not possible to have one made, one can be obtained from a commercial provider. If the body is to be cremated, the head end of the coffin must be marked. If people wish to decorate the coffin, any paint applied should be water based.

### **5. ASSESS TRANSPORTATION NEEDS**

Transportation in a coffin must be arranged from the site of death to wherever the body needs to go. A sheet may be used to lift the body into the coffin. A coffin containing a body should not be visible during transportation. Three or more adults will be required to lift the coffin containing an adult. A truck or van should be measured to ensure that it is long enough for an adult coffin. A child's coffin will fit in larger cars.

### **6. LAYING OUT**

This process is optional, and may include washing and dressing the body for viewing and burial, or for cremation. Laying Out may take place at home, or in a community building

with many people participating. It helps if the people gather beforehand to discuss with an experienced person what to expect and what they will do. Items need to be assembled such as water, disposable gloves, towels and clothes.

#### **7. ARRANGE VIEWING, if desired**

Viewing can occur at home or in a community building. If the viewing period is to be greater than 72 hours, embalming may be necessary to preserve body tissues.

In situations of sudden death, or when family or friends have not seen the deceased person for some time, the opportunity to see the body can be a crucial component in coming to terms with the reality that death has occurred.

#### **8. MAKE FUNERAL, CEREMONIAL or MEMORIAL SERVICE PLANS**

Ceremonies serve various purposes including community acknowledgement of the death, providing support, sharing the grief with bereaved family and friends, and celebrating the life of the person who has died. The body or cremated remains may be present at the service but do not need to be. Arrangements can be made entirely by the family and friends, or may include a religious leader. An 'order of service' may be prepared that includes biographic or other information, and whatever rituals, readings, music etc are chosen.

#### **9. DISPOSITION OF CREMATED REMAINS**

Arrangements will be needed to pick up the cremains (commonly known as ashes). Cremains weigh 4-8 pounds, and are returned from the crematorium in a plastic bag or cardboard box. They may be transferred to an urn, buried, or scattered as desired. Urns may be made of various materials, eg pottery, brass, wood. It is possible that if cremains are scattered on water they may not sink and the water will move them to the shore.

#### **10. ARRANGE NOTICES**

If desired, write and place a funeral notice or obituary in a newspaper.

In New Denver, it is traditional to post a notice in the window of the Post Office.

### **LEGAL AUTHORITY to CONTROL DISPOSITION of the BODY**

The legal authority to control the disposition of the body of the deceased person cannot be changed, and is in the following order of priority:

- a) the personal representative named in the will of the deceased (ie the executor of the estate)
- b) the spouse (including same sex partnerships) of the deceased, if living with the deceased at the time of death, or a person who was living with the deceased as husband or wife for a continuous period of not less than two years
- c) an adult child
- d) a parent

- e) an adult brother or sister
- f) an adult nephew or niece
- g) an adult next-of-kin determined by the Estate Administration Act

Under c) to g), the order of priority is from oldest to youngest.

If a person is unavailable or unwilling to give instructions, the right passes to the next available qualified person.

## **COSTS of BURIAL or CREMATION**

All expenses are the responsibility of the family of the deceased or their estate. Costs vary greatly and may be higher than quoted. Local cemetery fees are higher on weekends and holidays, and for non-residents. Some commercial providers charge transportation and/or administration fees.

In 2014, excluding taxes, *approximate* costs START at:

Coffin	\$250.00	
Grave space in New Denver Cemetery	\$150.00	-Non Resident \$400.00
Opening and Closing the Grave	\$350.00	
Ash burial	\$90.00	

There are also additional charges for after hour, weekend and holiday burials.

Urn	\$ Check with local funeral director
Cremation	\$ 1000.00+ Can Vary depending on provider.
Embalming	\$ Check with local funeral director

## REQUIRED FORMS

### Forms Check list:

1. Registration of Death, required by the Department of Vital Statistics
2. Medical Certificate of Death, supplied and completed by physician
3. Burial Permit, will be received from Vital Statistics
4. Private Transfer Permit, from Business Practices and Consumer Protection Branch
5. Cremation Authorization, supplied by Crematorium
6. Death Certificate, issued by Vital Statistics
7. Birth Certificate
8. Notification of Death, obtained from and returned to Government of Canada
9. Death Benefit Application, obtained from and returned to Government of Canada.

## DETAILS OF REQUIRED FORMS

***Fill all forms out in black ink so the writing can be copied by fax machines.***

***Have a local fax number ready for forms to be faxed to you.***

### 1. REGISTRATION OF DEATH

This form is required by the Department of Vital Statistics **as soon as possible** following the death. The forms are numbered, and will be faxed to you when you call 250 712 7595.

The LWS recommends compiling the information on this form ahead of time as part of the preplanning process; it is an added stress to gather the required information at the time a death occurs.

### 2. MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

The physician of the person who has died will supply this form and fill it out, and it may need to be picked up when completed.

Information concerning the cause of death is confidential to the next-of-kin.

If the coroner is involved, they will issue this Certificate.

Unless a legal name change has taken place, the name on these forms must be the same as the name on the person's Birth Certificate, or the forms will be rejected. The Birth Certificate *or* Immigration Papers may be required and should be available.

**The Registration of Death and Medical Certificate of Death forms must be faxed together to Vital Statistics as soon as possible to 250 712 7598.**

### **3. BURIAL PERMIT**

The Burial Permit will be faxed back from Vital Statistics within a couple of hours of receiving the Registration of Death and Medical Certificate of Death.

Three copies will be issued: one for the funeral director, or the family in the case of a private funeral; one for a religious leader if they are involved; and one for the cemetery or crematorium. The Burial Permit authorizes transportation of the body, which may not be moved until this form and the Private Transfer Permit are received.

### **WEEKENDS**

On weekends, there is a problem obtaining a Burial Permit, as the Vital Statistics Office is closed and a Permit will not be issued until Monday.

If a weekend death is expected, the form may be requested ahead of time.

If difficulty occurs on a weekend, it may be appropriate to obtain assistance from a commercial funeral provider.

### **4. PRIVATE TRANSFER PERMIT**

This form is required because a commercial funeral provider is not involved, and is headed BPCPA Cemetery and Funeral Services. A copy may be available through the LWS; if not, call the District Registrar in Nakusp at 250 265 4865. It should be filled out, faxed, and returned to you, before the body is moved.

### **5. CREMATION AUTHORIZATION**

A form for this authorization is provided by the crematorium, to be completed by the executor or next-of-kin.

The crematorium requires copies of the Medical Certificate of Death, Burial Permit and Private Transfer Permit. They may also ask for the Birth Certificate or Immigration Papers.

### **6. DEATH CERTIFICATE**

This certificate is required if there is an estate to settle, for death benefits, to obtain compassionate airline tickets and for other reasons. It is obtained by calling the District Registrar's office in Nakusp, at 250 265 4865, and faxing in the completed form. There is a fee for each copy.

## **7. BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

Required to accompany proof of death documents.

## **8. NOTIFICATION OF DEATH**

This is used to stop payment of CPP and Old Age Pensions, GST benefits etc, in order to avoid overpayment which would then need to be returned. Call 1 800 959 8281 to obtain the forms.

## **9. CPP BENEFIT APPLICATION**

This only applies to people who have paid into CPP.

**The Death Benefit** is a one-time, lump sum payment made to the estate of the deceased. The amount depends upon the payments made to the plan; in 2014 the maximum was \$ 2,500.00. The Death Benefit is taxable and will need to be declared as income on the deceased's final income tax form.

**CPP Survivor's Pension** for legal spouse or common-law partner.

**CPP Children's Benefit** for dependent or adopted children under 18.

Within a couple of weeks of the death, the original copies of the Registration of Death and Medical Certificate of Death, together with a copy of the Birth Certificate, must be mailed to:

The Department of Vital Statistics  
101, 1475 Ellis Street  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2A3.

**The paperwork can be the most difficult part of a home funeral, but only if you haven't prepared yourself.**

### **LAST WISHES CONTACTS**

For information or services, please call one of the Board members:

Gloria Lisgo 250 358 2253

Carolyn Parker 250 358 7760

Kay Costley-White 250 358 7991

Gail Heibert 250 358 2397

Roger Lewis 250 358 2158

Jamie Barber 250 358 7269

Karen Dubreuil

Jane Murphy

Last Wishes Guidelines and membership papers are stored in a box at the home of Gloria Lisgo at 1316 Vancouver Street, Denver Siding. 250 358 2253. If there is no response, please call other board members to access necessary papers.

Add in Web address. [www.carpentercreeklastwishessociety.ca](http://www.carpentercreeklastwishessociety.ca)

### **KOOTENAY AREA COMMERCIAL FUNERAL SERVICE PROVIDERS**

These are businesses which offer a wide variety of services, from full formal funerals to cremation only. Their costs vary, and it is important to request full disclosure of all fees they will charge. As well as the basic fee for the service you request, they may charge transportation fees, administration fees or others.

## NELSON

Thompson Funeral Services and Crematorium

613 Ward Street, Nelson 250 352 3613

## NAKUSP

Valley Funeral Home

101 Nelson Avenue, Nakusp 250 265 4316

This is owned by Thompson's in Nelson, and also provides service in Nelson at 250 352 0036 and Trail at 250 364 0036.

## CASTLEGAR

Castlegar Funeral Chapel

411 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Castlegar 250 365 3222

This is owned and operated by Alternatives Funeral and Cremation Services in Trail.

## TRAIL

Alternatives Funeral and Cremation Services

1298 Pine Avenue, Trail 250 368 8080

This business uses Carberry's Chapel in Trail for services.

## KELOWNA

Springfield Funeral Home will do cremations on weekends if the body is delivered to them.

They would charge extra for transportation from the New Denver area.