

**Standard funeral customs and disposition methods have become commonplace without much thought or understanding of their environmental consequences. By considering green disposition methods like a natural “green” burial or aquamation, you can reduce the environmental impact and leave a positive legacy aligned with your personal values while protecting the Earth for future generations.**

Traditional casket burials have the strongest negative impact on the environment. They use the most land & significant upkeep is required. Materials such as caskets and vault lines are often not biodegradable (or take years to biodegrade). There is also a high chance of soil contamination from embalming fluids and other chemicals used to preserve bodies for traditional burials.

Cremation is another poor choice for the environment. The energy needed to reach and maintain cremation temperatures is immense and 1 cremation is estimated to produce 1/4 of a tonne (535lbs) of carbon dioxide, equal to 980km drive in an average vehicle.

# YOU HAVE OTHER CHOICES

## ALKALINE HYDROLYSIS (AQUAMATION)

- ☛ process uses water and alkaline chemicals and heat to break down/dissolve soft tissues of a body leaving just the bones
- ☛ heated water/solution gently circulated during process
- ☛ remaining bones are then dried and reduced to a fine powder, much like traditional cremation
- ☛ water is returned to the ecosystem via normal wastewater treatment facility
- ☛ very low water usage (less than avg. household per day)
- ☛ doesn't require burial space or the use of fossil fuels
- ☛ emits 90% less carbon emissions
- ☛ any metals (implants) are clean & sterile and send for recycling into new materials

## NATURAL (GREEN) BURIAL

- ☛ body is wrapped in a shroud or placed in a biodegradable container (simple wood casket) and buried in ground as is allowing body to decay naturally (no graveliners or vaults used)
- ☛ takes less space than regular cemetery
- ☛ process usually takes place within a day or two
- ☛ buried deep enough that animals can not disturb
- ☛ typically no embalming used so chemicals do not leak into the ground (if it is winter, a more environmentally friendly fluid may be used to keep body until it can be buried in warmer temp)
- ☛ sites typically have natural ecosystems such as wildflowers & small or no grave markers, vs. maintained/manicured lawns at cemeteries
- ☛ sites must be approved so that no chemicals leak into the ground or water sources nearby

Human composting is currently not a legal method of disposition in Ontario.