



HELPFUL CHRONOLOGICAL CHECKLIST

(updated June 2021)

Crystal Lake Township Personnel will help with all the following:

- Procure a copy of most recent CLT Cemetery Ordinance, and current list of associated fees:** Inform yourself completely before entering into any aspect of cemetery business. For example, as of 2021, lots of new information has been updated and is either posted online or available by request. There is an amended Ordinance and both new burial fees and new charges for foundations. Note, for another example, that burial charges now may vary according to what kind of burial, which season or which the day of the week, and whether one is a township property owner. There are no longer any holiday burials. And do you know the rules for decorations or plantings on your gravesite? Ask if you have any questions.
- Purchase a Burial Right, OR find family records of previous purchase:** This document is called a Certificate of Burial Right (often erroneously labeled a “deed”) awards the right to burial but not ownership of the land. We require proof of this Right either as an owner or a relative of the owner, or someone who the owner has given permission to be buried on the site before you commence with a burial or the placement of a stone. If you are purchasing a new Burial Right, we shall personally assist in making your selection, walk the grounds with you, and supply you with maps. If you already have a plot, we should have copies in our records in case you can’t find them in your family files. These are open records, available to the public, and we would be glad to give you duplicates of anything we have.
- Locate your plot in cemetery, and mark its boundaries:** We are fully prepared to assist with this often difficult task, for both your protection and ours. Depending on location, plots are of different sizes and shapes. Some sections are set aside just for cremains; others may or may not allow for all modern “full burials” (caskets encased in vaults) that require more space than was traditionally allotted when that section was originally platted. Some plot corners are clearly marked with brown or white numbered ceramic disks, others with only sunken iron rods, if they are marked at all. It is necessary to find the boundaries of the plots to avoid errors that can take a heavy emotional, as well as possible financial toll, should someone ever be buried in the wrong place.
- Create or retrieve a diagram of the existing/future graves and monuments at your site:** We started to produce these diagrams in 2012, along with accompanying notes. It is now standard practice. The creation of a plot or section diagram is best accomplished by a joint visit to the site (some combination of township personnel, our sexton and family members.) The diagram shall reflect the location of any *existing* gravesites/stones, and will help immensely in determining the space available for burials when, for example, in the years to come no one can recall exactly where a relative’s ashes were placed (e.g. are they under, behind or in front of the stone?). The process of this mapping will also be helpful to determine, in the best of a pre-planned scenario, the location of *future* graves/stones. It would be helpful to have instructions on file such as, “*Our wishes are: husband and wife to be in the middle of the plots with an upright stone with the family name on it, and two sons’ families dividing the remaining spaces, to the west and east respectively, with all subsequent stones with individual names to lay flat.*” Or gave us directions as simple as, “*Your Mother and I want to be side-by-side, in the NW corner of the plot with a shared, double headstone.*” It would also be especially helpful if the Township can produce a good plot map with directions when a stone arrives after the burial has taken place and the monument company asks for assistance in placing the stone in the correct place.
- Work with township in the placement of the new graves and/or markers:** Placement of graves and the stones that mark them requires your full cooperation with the township. First, if the original Burial Right Owner left record of their wishes for the placement of their remains/stones with us, a funeral director or the family, we can immediately approve and act on those expressed wishes. But if there are no known instructions, we will help to ascertain where the deceased’s remains and a subsequent marker will rest with respect to other burials, stones and plot boundaries. Locations of new gravesites/monuments will then be accurately maintained in our record files. Note: Want to place a stone prior to death? We’ll work with you. It is not unusual for folks to pre-arrange their own monuments in advance of death.
- Inform us of date/time of burial and which funeral service provider you are employing:** Let us know well in advance the

time/date of your planned service so that we can have ready everything for which the Township is responsible, and to avoid conflict with other activities such as another burial service or grass mowing. If you are planning a "Full" burial or a "Green" burial, with a body, state regulations require a licensed funeral director/representative to be in attendance. If cremation has taken place, the state has no claim on the ashes (except not to pollute any body of water with them.) You may or may not choose to employ a funeral service provider to help you with burial of ashes. However, if you wish to bury them without a service provider, as many families do, our township has its own legally-binding rules and regulations: you must bury (not scatter) ashes and, while respecting your privacy and never intruding on your personal service, a township representative shall always be present and standing by somewhere near in the cemetery.

- If burying cremains, give us the dimensions of the container:** If the deceased person is not cremated, the Sexton will already know the size to dig for a green burial or a full burial with a vault. If the deceased is cremated, families choose all sorts of containers for their deceased's ashes and it would be beneficial for us know in advance its size and shape (e.g. wooden box, china urn, marble vase.) We strongly suggest --but don't require-- a durable, retrievable container. Many families also add the further protection of a 2 x 2 x 2 plastic cremains vault. Likewise, let us know if you plan no container at all but instead want to pour the ashes directly back into the earth, so that we can advise you and record your decision to do so, accordingly.
- Give us copies of all pertinent paperwork in advance:** We request a copy of a death certificate (it doesn't need to be an original) and Veteran of the US Armed Forces status. We require, as applicable, any transit permit, certificate of cremation, and. We also welcome any voluntary contributions for our records such as a copy of an obituary, or a short family tree which would explain the relationship of all persons interred at your site.
- Pay for the Township's cost of burial before interment:** No burial shall take place without payment in full for Township services. Conditions for payment must be arranged prior to the burial. We much prefer that payment is sent to the township in advance, though transfer payment through the funeral provider is allowed. Please let us know which you choose. Interment will be halted in case of non-payment. Also, remember the Township's costs are separate from those costs charged for embalming and dressing, coffins, urns and vaults, cremation, a funeral, a religious representative, music, a hearse, a monument and all other products or services provided by private companies.
- Order a grave marker:** If not already placed at your site, a permanent monument is required, and must be placed within one year of a burial. Procuring/placing a stone starts with the township and ordinance consultation. Monuments cannot be placed just anywhere, nor can they be of just any shape or design. Would you like some suggestions on where to order a marker, do you need a stone carver to fill in dates of a pre-existing stone? Do you have ideas for a non-traditional marker that will need special written approval? Need a veteran's marker or want cornerstones to mark your plot boundaries? We do not sell stones, and have no monetary stake in helping you find a company who does, but we can still be of great assistance. Since markers are often delivered well after the burial, let us know your plans and what company you are using so that we can provide your monument company representative with contact information, addresses, maps, diagrams and any special instructions, as well as possibly meet the delivery at the site.
- Order a foundation:** Before a marker can be set, you are required to buy a foundation through the township on which the stone will be leveled and then sit well through the ages. As soon as you know the dimensions of your monument, directly arrange and pay for the purchase of this foundation and the labor to install it with Crystal Lake Township, *not* the funeral home or monument company. The cost will depend on the size of the monument you've chosen. Only our work personnel, under direct township supervision, installs foundations according to the agreed-upon site diagram.
- Follow up post-interment:** After the burial, there are many follow-up questions you may wish to have answered. Was your stone delivered as expected and was it placed properly? Was the reseeding of grass successful? Do you have permission to plant a tree or bush? Feel comfortable conferring with us; we are always here to assist you and help with any of your inquiries.