

Vermont Green Death Digital Resources

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PLANNING & PREPARATION

The After-Death Care Educator Handbook, written and edited by Lee Webster, is strongly recommended as a companion volume to accompany the Guiding Workbook and these Digital Resources. Released in 2022, It's available [on Amazon](#) for about \$20.

Legal matters

Take care of legal tasks related to your estate so legally you can rest assured for when death comes. [The AARP has published a checklist here.](#)

Bodily donation to science

The [UVM Larner College of Medicine's Anatomical Gift Program](#) is the assumed go-to for Vermonters wishing to donate their bodies to science. Find their [FAQ page here.](#)

DNR/COLST (Clinician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment)

The Vermont Ethics network has a copy of the form, an informative slide deck as well as a related video all available [here.](#)

General Knowledge

Explore the [Vermont Funeral Resources and Education](#) website. it's the best, most comprehensive, state-specific online resource. It includes the basics of [Vermont Law](#) around death and dying, which is important to know.

Home Funerals

Peruse the [National Home Funeral Alliance's](#) website and contact them with any specific questions.

Calls and Visits

Visit offices that could likely be involved when you die, to state your intentions and discover what they know/understand. Include: Government offices, Health Dept, your doctor, Coroner's office, Hospital, Vermont Respite House, Cemetery Commissions/Commissioners of the one/s you have in mind. As you gain knowledge, spread it!

Consumer awareness

Planning to purchase any funeral products or services? As you compare funeral homes, the [Funeral Consumers Alliance](#) is a consumer watchdog that works hard to hold the industry accountable to the regulations it had a major hand in establishing.

Medical Aid in Dying

The Vermont Ethics Network offers key detailed information about Vermont's Medical Aid in Dying, [Act 39](#)

ACTIVELY DYING

[This TedTalk](#) by Kathryn Mannix is about the practical wisdom we've so recently forgotten (which we're recovering) about what happens, and what to expect, in the final days and hours prior to death.

The Hospice Foundation of America offers these [signs of death's approach](#).

[This page](#) on the National End-of-Life Doula Alliance's website provides, state by state, their member death doulas.

AFTER DEATH

Legal Forms:

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF DEATH (PROD) [is available online](#) through the Vermont Department of Health. - Must be submitted to the [Vermont Department of Vital records](#) within 48 hours. It can be mailed, faxed, or hand-delivered to their Burlington office. Print off a copy to have on hand and read it over to see if you have any questions. You can complete the Demographic Information side if you're acting as funeral director. The hospice nurse, doctor or medical examiner completes and signs the Medical Certification side.

DEATH CERTIFICATE - (a certified copy) is issued and can be obtained after the info from the PROD is entered by staff into the Electronic Death Registration (EDR) system. Call the town clerk of the deceased's town of death to ask how soon the death certificate will be available for you to pick up.

TRANSIT PERMIT - Meanwhile, once the PROD is completed, your town clerk (or any law enforcement officer) will issue a burial-transit (or burial, removal, and transit (BRT) permit. It gets filed in the town where the body's final disposition (typically, cremation or burial) will be. You must have a transit permit prior to transporting the body to this place, however you MAY transport the body home from the hospital or medical examiner's office for a vigil or visiting time before the PROD has been signed. [This page on the VT Dept of Health website](#) covers many legal details.

[This page](#) on the Vermont Funeral Education & Advocacy website also reviews some very helpful details about after-death paperwork.

If death circumstances are unusual and/or if death occurs due to a rare or infectious disease, [this page](#) on the VT Dept of Health website covers the law and proper procedures to follow.

SERVICES, PRODUCTS & CEMETERIES

Wood coffins

[Knock Knock Coffins](#): natural wood coffins, based in Burlington.

[Vermont Coffins](#): based in Plainfield. Just make sure he can do an unfinished (raw wood) product.

Burial shrouds

[Last Dance Shrouds](#): locally-sourced, upcycled, natural fiber shrouds, based in Western MA. I believe you can also send her your special fabrics/clothing items and have them incorporated. The proprietor is Dina Stander, a woman whom I greatly respect and admire.

Willow coffins

[Fraser Baskets](#): based in Dummerston, VT and also MA, she serves New England with hand-woven coffins.

Various products

[Funeraryartisanscollective.org](#) - not local per se, but you can search based on your location and there are lots of locally-sourced products, including caskets, urns, shrouds, and more.

Green-affirming Funeral Homes

[Guare & Son Barber & Lanier](#): this Montpelier-based funeral home includes more about green burial support and packages on their website than any other Vermont funeral home I've found. You'd want to inquire as to whether they serve your area.

[Gregory & Son Cremation Service](#): based in South Burlington, I am told they have helped with a handful of green burials in recent years, though their website mentions nothing about this.

Death Doulas and Home Funeral Guides

[The National Home Funeral Alliance](#) has several professionals listed when you search within a 120-mile radius of Burlington.

[The National End-of-Life Doula Alliance](#) offers a directory of end-of-life care providers and offers trainings. By definition, doulas support the dying and their families during all that happens until the last breath.

[Francesca Arnoldy](#), who founded UVM's Death Doula Certificate program, is a leader in growing the movement, but practices actively with clients and families as her schedule allows.

Conservation Burial / Natural Burial

[Higher Ground Conservation Burial](#) in Newfane (Southern VT): while burials aren't permitted as of spring 2024, They are taking subscriptions. This burial ground has been developed with incredible care and dedication and is slated to be Vermont's first conservation burial ground.

[Vermont Forest Cemetery](#) in Roxbury (Central VT) opened in the fall of 2023. While it exists for natural burials and follows conservation guidelines, it is not formally certified as a conservation cemetery.

[The Green Burial Council](#), the standard-bearer of the movement, publishes [standards and best practices](#) which clarify distinctions between the three main types of cemetery: Hybrid, Natural, and Conservation

Hybrid Cemeteries

[New Hampshire Funeral Education & Advocacy](#) maintains this page, listed by state, of hybrid, green, and conservation cemeteries with their addresses and contact info. As of fall 2023, there were 22 cemeteries listed in Vermont.

For the visually-oriented, here is [a Google Map](#) with pins locating municipalities offering some form of natural burial.

To learn about natural burial on private land, read the Vermont Department of Health’s overview of the Acts and Statutes pertaining to [Burial on Private Property in Vermont](#). The Vermont Statutes online has the complete language in Chapter 121: [Cemeteries § 5319. Disposition of remains of dead](#).

Those interested in further details of Vermont Cemetery Law can reference [Digging Deep: Unearthing the Mysteries of Burial and Cemetery Law](#), a 34-page guide published by Vermont Secretary of State Jim Condos, and last revised in 2017.

ARTICLES

[A new cemetery in Roxbury, VT is “like going on a hike.”](#) Vermont Public, Nov. 1, 2023

[Would You Want to Be Composted After You Die? Mass Lawmakers Want to Make it an Option.](#) Boston Globe, 1/4/23

[As Fewer People Choose Burial Vermont’s Cemeteries Struggle to Maintain their Grounds](#) Seven Days, 10/26/22

[If You Want to Give Something Back to Nature Give Your Body](#) New York Times, 2022.

[Dying can be a Taboo Topic. Enter the Death Doula.](#) Washington Post, 2022

PODCASTS

[A Path Home](#) is published by the National Home Funeral Alliance

FORMS AVAILABLE ONLINE

[Form: Appointment of a Health Care Agent](#)

[Vermont Advance Directive for Health Care \(Short Form\)](#)

[Vermont Advance Directive for Health Care \(Long Form\)](#)

[Vermont DNR/COLST - Clinician orders for DNR/CPR & other Life Sustaining Treatment](#)

[Vermont Preliminary Report of Death \(PROD\) form](#)