

May 27, 2011

AmConGen Calgary

DEATHS: Disposition of Remains  
**(Province of Alberta)**

Department of State- CA/OCS/ACS/WHA

Ref: 7 FAM 260

The Consulate General Calgary submits herewith a revised report on local regulations, prices, etc., regarding Disposition of Remains for the Province of Alberta.

1. **Maximum Period before Burial**

When death has been due to communicable diseases, such as bubonic plague, cholera, diphtheria, scarlet fever, typhoid fever, typhus or smallpox, burial must take place within 36 hours following death. This period may be extended, however, by obtaining written permission of the local Medical Officer of Health. Such permission will only be granted if all body orifices have been blocked with absorbent cotton and the body has been embalmed or enclosed in a metal or metallined coffin. There are no other regulations requiring burial within a specific period of time. Bodies may be stored in receiving vaults for any period of time, provided no offensive environment is created.

2. **Embalming**

All the major cities and towns in the district have facilities for embalming. Bodies ordinarily are embalmed as soon as released by the physician or court, although embalming is not mandatory for local burial unless remains are kept over 72 hours. Remains must be embalmed if shipped by common carrier (even within Alberta). Bodies transported outside the Province of Alberta must be viewed by a Medical Examiner prior to shipment. The Examiner must sign a document of release. If embalming is performed, it must be undertaken by a person who holds a valid Embalmer's License issued by the Provincial Board Health, Province of Alberta.

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### 3. **Cremation**

There are ten crematoriums in Edmonton, nine in Calgary, three in Lethbridge, one in Bon Accord, three in Medicine Hat, one in High River, one in Grande Prairie, one in Camrose, one in Lloydminster, one in Lacombe, one in Rocky Mountain House, one in Sherwood Park, and one in Innisfail for a total of 34 in the province. Remains may be cremated by prior request of the deceased, or at the request of the immediate family. Immediate family preference takes precedence. Cremation must be undertaken in accordance with the Cemeteries Act and Regulations respecting the establishment, operation and Licensing of Crematoriums.

### 4. **Disinterment**

Disinterment may be ordered by a coroner or a court having jurisdiction. Normally the Local Board of Health must also be satisfied that the body or the coffin may not be in such a state of decomposition as would be offensive to those persons conducting the disinterment. Disinterment certificates must be signed by the Chief Medical Health Officer. Before the certificate can be issued, immediate family members must submit a request in writing to the Division of Vital Statistics.

### 5. **Caskets and Containers**

When the remains of a deceased person are to be transported out of the country or within the country, the remains are placed in metal, wooden or cardboard casket which are capable of being hermetically sealed and satisfy requirements prevalent throughout the province. Such containers are readily available locally.

### 6. **Exportation of Remains**

A burial permit issued by the Provincial Registrar of Vital Statistics and a death certificate issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (Coroner) of the Province, is necessary to export either a body or cremated remains. The cause of death must be stated on the certificate issued by the Medical Examiner. The funeral home usually obtains the required certificates. A body does not necessarily have to be embalmed if it is going to be transported within Alberta. The body must be embalmed if it is going to be transported to the United States via the Funeral Company's hearse or by common carrier from origin to destination. Most airlines now provide a heavy duty security pouch in lieu of the former wooden box in which the casket was previously carried; these usually are rented from the airlines by the funeral home. If a body is going to be shipped to the United States, the standards of the receiving state must be complied with.

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## 7. Costs

### A. Burial, Cremation:

Funeral costs vary considerably. The average cost is US\$6903 up or down, depending upon the type of casket chosen and other services provided. These charges are allinclusive, that is, the transport of the body locally, all documentation, services by a clergyman etc. They do not include a cemetery plot or transportation outside the immediate area (see note below). A cemetery plot, in perpetuity, can be obtained in Calgary for about US\$1972, but this does not include the cost of opening/closing a grave US\$789. The cremation includes documentation and container costs approximately US\$1183-2958 for an adult person and US\$493 for children between the ages of 5 and 10, and US\$444 for children under 5 years; most funeral homes charge only minimal fees when dealing with deceased children. Costs for keeping the cremated remains of a deceased person at crematoriums vary with the length of time that they are to be kept. Usually there is no charge for keeping the cremated remains of a deceased person for burial for the first 60 days. After 60 days, the fee averages about US\$10-15 per month or US\$148 per year. Fees for permanent storage are about US\$1184-1972. Costs for urns for the storage of cremated remains vary from US\$25-2465. The Province of Alberta can grant approximately US\$1775 for total funeral and burial expenses in cases where individuals die leaving no family or estate, though the province may grant more or less depending on cause of death. The province *may* provide repatriation assistance, but such assistance is given on a case-by-case basis, usually subject to cause of death, length of stay in Canada, relationship to Canada, etc.

### B. Shipment:

Preparation of the remains by a funeral home for shipment to U.S. for burial is approximately \$1650CAD+. A reduction in costs is possible by having a funeral home in the United States make the arrangements with the Canadian funeral home. Bodies and cremated remains may be shipped by air to the United States using the services of one of several airlines operating between Calgary or Edmonton and various cities in the United States. The following costs and charges for shipment from Calgary are based on a body plus casket weighing 330 lbs. (150 kg). Shipping costs will vary depending on actual weight and the dimensions of the casket.

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<u>FINAL DESTINATION</u>	<u>AIRLINE</u>	<u>COST IN U.S. FUNDS</u>
Boston	Air Canada	\$663
Chicago	Air Canada	\$513
Cleveland	Air Canada	\$513
Miami	Air Canada	\$663
New York City	Air Canada	\$663
San Francisco	Air Canada	\$513
Los Angeles	Air Canada	\$513
Seattle	Air Canada	\$453
Denver	Air Canada	\$513
Houston	Air Canada	\$513

Cremated remains are usually sent by weight at the normal airfreight rate.

**8. REMARKS:**

1. Charges shown are based on the exchange rate as of May 27, 2011.  
U.S. \$1.00 equals to Canadian \$1.00.
2. All fees are approximate.
3. Costs do not include transportation from remote areas to the nearest funeral home.
4. There will be additional 5% GST (Goods & Services Tax) on all of the services provided.