

**Town of Thetford, Vermont**  
**Cemetery Rules and Regulations**

**1. Declaration of Policy.**

The Town of Thetford's elected Cemetery Commissioners hereby ordain that the following Rules and Regulations are hereby (have been) established for the proper operation and use of the cemeteries in the Town of Thetford. The Town of Thetford recognizes that the cemeteries are sacred grounds and desires to have the cemeteries maintained in the best possible manner. The Town firmly believes that these Rules and Regulations are necessary for the protection of lot and grave owners, and for the proper conduct and good order of the cemeteries.

**2. Application of the Rules and Regulations.**

The Town of Thetford Cemetery Commissioners upon its own motion, or upon recommendation of the Town Selectboard, for good cause shown, may modify, suspend, repeal, or amend the provisions of these Rules and Regulations in whole or in part at any time. It is the intent of the Cemetery Commissioners that if any portion of these Rules and Regulations are held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity shall not affect the validity of the remaining section or parts.

**3. General Regulations:**

The following shall be the general Rules and Regulation for the Town cemeteries.

Cemeteries will be open from April 15<sup>th</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup> from one hour after sunrise to 1 hour before sunset. From November 16<sup>th</sup> to April 14<sup>th</sup> the cemeteries are closed for burials and to vehicles.

Conduct in cemeteries. **No person shall:**

- a) Enter a cemetery except through an established gate or entranceway.
- b) Deposit rubbish or debris on cemetery grounds, except in receptacles provided. These receptacles are not to be used for dog waste.
- c) Pick or mutilate any flowers, either wild or domestic, or disturb any trees, shrubs, or other planted material.
- d) Use cemeteries for picnicking or as playgrounds, or consume alcoholic beverages in a cemetery, or bring the same on the premises.
- e) Discharge firearms in any cemetery. The prohibition shall not apply to authorized volleys at burial services conducted by recognized military organizations or associations of the United States.
- f) In any way injure or deface any monument, stone, fence or other structure or property within any cemetery.
- g) Allow any animal off-leash. Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times and owners must dispose of all refuse off-site. The Town provides neither bags nor waste removal.

- h) Allow a child under the age of twelve (12) years old in any cemetery unless accompanied by an adult.
- i) Hunt on cemetery property.

**4. Traffic Regulations:**

- a) No persons shall operate or cause to operate any vehicle within a cemetery except on roads designed for that purpose, and no vehicle shall be driven at a speed in excess of five (5) miles per hour upon any road within Town cemeteries.
- b) No persons shall enter any cemetery with a loaded truck, except the Grounds Keepers, unless permission has been received from the Cemetery Commission.
- c) No persons shall unload any stone, dirt or other material from trucks in any cemetery, except the Grounds Keepers in the normal discharge of their work.
- d) No bicycles; motorcycles; snowmobiles; off-highway recreation vehicles; or horse-drawn carts, carriage, or wagons may be used for ceremonies unless permission is given by the Sexton or Cemetery Commission. None of these are allowed on cemetery property at any other time.

**5. Purchase of Lots:**

**a) Condition of Lot Purchase.**

Lots purchased in the laid-out sections of cemeteries of the Town of Thetford shall be conveyed by special deed for burial purposes only, and shall be subject at all time to the provisions of the Town Rules and Regulations and applicable State Laws.

**b) Purchase Procedure.** Contact the Town of Thetford Cemetery Commission.

**c) Record of Cemetery Lot Purchase and Burials.**

The keeping of records of the cemeteries of the Town of Thetford shall be the responsibility of the Commissioners (to receive copies of all sales, transfers and burials from the Sexton within a period of ten (10) days after being executed). This includes all file cards showing burial information.

Original deeds conveyed for lot purchases shall be stored in the Town Vault.

Burial information will be recorded in a file system also located in the Town Vault.

**d) Transfer of Lots.**

The owners of the cemetery lot, or their heirs, shall not grant, sell, or convey said lot to any person other than the Town of Thetford. Resale of cemetery lots to the Town shall be for the same sale amount as originally paid for same. When a cemetery lot is resold to the Town, the original sale amount shall be returned to the owner. The original care monies, all income, the original cost of recording and corner post purchase and installation are non-refundable.

**e) The price of cemetery lots are determined annually by the Cemetery Commission.**

**6. Care and Maintenance.**

The care and maintenance of lots shall include the mowing and trimming of grass at reasonable intervals, the raking and cleaning of lots, the grading and seeding of lots, maintenance of cemetery fences and gates and the upkeep of drives and buildings. Monuments which are tipped or not level due to improper installation are the responsibility of the lot owner to make arrangements to have it fixed.

**7. Planting Trees or Shrubs is prohibited.**

No trees or shrubs shall be planted in any lot in any Town cemetery by any person or persons, except the Grounds Keepers under the direction of the Cemetery Commission. Existing trees or shrubs may be removed by the Grounds Keepers if detrimental to the maintenance of lots. All natural flowers and plants shall be potted in containers readily movable for maintenance operations. Any plants or flowers permanently planted may be removed and disposed of by the Grounds Keepers.

**8. Grading and Care of Lots.**

All grading of lots shall be done by the Grounds Keepers. No person shall do any grading causing the surface of the ground to be raised above the existing height of the surrounding area. Only a licensed contractor shall discharge any chemical or organic fertilizer, herbicide or other substance on any lot.

**9. Cemetery Decorations.**

The family is responsible for clearing all decorations from the cemetery lot, including flowers, artificial or natural, by November 15<sup>th</sup> and may be replaced on May 15<sup>th</sup> on the following year. Cement pots are excluded.

**10. Curbing and Fencing.**

No curbs or fences shall be permitted around any individual lot or group of lots that would impede the mowing and upkeep of the cemetery.

**11. Monument and Markers.**

All Town maintained cemeteries shall be permitted to have monuments, markers and corner stones of such dimension and material as shall be approved by the Cemetery Commission. All reference to "Monuments" is to mean monumentation of a permanent nature that protrudes above the lawn surface.

The intent of this section is to allow only one (1) above ground monument per owner's lot (grave or group of graves). All cornerstones, grass markers, and markers shall be set flush with the lawn surface (so that no part shall protrude above the surface of the ground). Permission for more than one stone is solely at that discretion of the Cemetery Commission.

In the event that the preceding rule is not observed, the Cemetery Commission shall notify the lot owner, in writing, concerning the deficiency and advise a date corrective action must be taken, after which time the marker in violation may be pulled pending correct placement. Any work done by the Grounds Keepers to correct above deficiency will be billed at \$50.00 an hour.

**12. Monument Foundation and Marker Setting.**

Foundations (sub-base) for monuments are to be the responsibility of the company installing the monument and shall be constructed of concrete. Corner Markers are to be installed by the monument company at marks indicated by pins or wooden pegs placed by the cemetery Sexton or their assistants. If incorrectly installed, it is the owner's responsibility. Corner Markers are required to be installed within 30 days from the time of the purchase of the lot. If Corner Markers are not installed, the Town will place them and bill the owner.

**13. Burials.**

- a) No burial shall take place without a burial transit permit from the state where the death occurred. All conditions of laws and rules & regulations will be followed.
- b) The Grounds Keepers will open graves for burial from April 15 to November 15, weather and other circumstances permitting. In case circumstances are such that burial cannot be made, temporary interment shall be the responsibility of the funeral director.
- c) All interments shall be done under the supervision of the Cemetery Commission/Sexton.
- d) Scattering of cremated remains within the cemetery is prohibited.

**14. Preparation of Grave.**

This shall be the responsibility of the funeral director handling the funeral in accordance with the Grounds Keepers/Sexton.

**15. Town Not Responsible.**

Neither the Town of Thetford nor the Grounds Keepers shall be responsible for errors in location of graves on lots arising from persons making arrangements. In all cases, orders for grave openings shall be communicated in writing to the Cemetery Commission.

**16. Outside Burial.**

In matters pertaining to burials coming into the Town from outside agencies, unless the exact lot and grave location is ordered with sufficient identification to the satisfaction of the Cemetery Commission, the body will remain with the outside agency pending proper arrangements at the family's expense.

**17. Permanent Outside Containers.**

In all full interments, the remains shall be enclosed in a permanent outside container and shall be installed under the supervision of the Cemetery Commission. The owner of the lot or their agent shall provide the container. The following are considered permanent outside containers: concrete boxes with cover, copper or steel vaults, ceramic cremation urns, or any material made to withstand the elements of burial. Cremated remains do not require a permanent outside container.

Any violations of these Cemetery Rules and Regulations will be reported to the Town of Thetford Cemetery Commission and appropriate action will be taken, including possible fees and fines.

Adopted September 12, 2023 by the Thetford Cemetery Commission