

Planning the Burial

Not all home funerals end with a green burial. Many families opt for cremation or a standard, modern burial, so only consider the advice in this section that applies to your situation. However, whatever your plans, the central advice is to anticipate problems and be flexible as necessary. You may be fully devoted to realizing your vision, but sometimes weather, burial containers, and humans, whether dead or alive, can ruin your planned-to-the-letter event.

In addition to the emotional and spiritual aspects of funerals, there are always logistical and practical factors to consider: For instance, what's the weather forecast? What season is it? If you're holding a backyard burial, is the ground frozen or flooded and not suitable for digging? Have you anticipated every step of transporting your loved one from their deathbed to the gravesite? Do you have all the tools and equipment you need, and a backup plan if things change? If anyone will be upset by your and your loved one's wish to have a home funeral plan if things change? If anyone will be upset by your and your loved one's wish to have a home funeral and a green burial, might they refuse to attend the service or could they hold up the burial if they don't agree with it?

What if the deceased is a bit of a trickster and decides to enjoy some mayhem at their final farewell?

Of course, you can't anticipate every problem. But here is a list of the things you should take care of prior to a loved one's death, to

make sure that everything runs smoothly (or as smoothly as it can) when the time comes.

Paperwork: Do you have a completed death certificate (and burial permit, if your state requires it)? Is there any will or legal documents that need to be located and read over?

Hired helpers: Will you need a funeral director? A machine operator? An engineer?

Volunteer helpers: Have you asked or assigned people to help with the service and handling the body? Do you need pallbearers, grave-diggers, drivers, a volunteer coordinator?

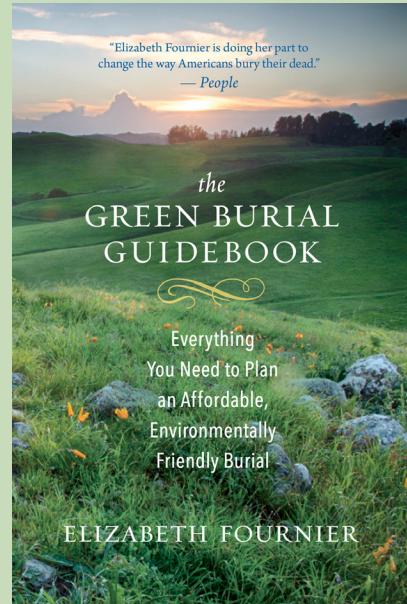
Cemetery: Has everything been paid for? Has the legal owner of the grave space signed the interment authorization? Does the driver know the best route to the cemetery? Have they done a dry run to check for current construction zones or any unknowns?

Backyard burial: Have you confirmed the suitability and legality of the gravesite? Has the exact space been decided on?

Transportation of the body: Do you have a vehicle, or can you borrow one? Have you confirmed the burial container fits in the vehicle? Who will drive and load the body into the vehicle? What is the plan for removing the body at the final destination?

Burial container: What do you plan to use? Do you have it ready? Who will act as pallbearers, and do they need instruction on how to handle the container? Do you need a lowering board or device under it?

Gravedigging plan: Do you have the necessary tools and helpers when it's time to dig? Have you inspected the soil and located any obstacles?



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The Green Burial Guidebook

Everything you need to plan an affordable, environmentally friendly burial

The Green Reaper:
Memoirs of an Eco-Mortician

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