

Newport Historic Cemetery Advisory Commission (HCAC)
Policy for Restoration and Conservation of Gravestones

This information is presented to guide work on grave stones and maintain the historic integrity of the stones and the burying ground. It is also provided to assist contractors hired to undertake stone work in one of Newport's public burying grounds*.

1. Before any work starts on a stone located in a public burying ground in Newport, a written proposal must be submitted to the Newport Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds**. This includes removal, installation, or alteration of a gravestone or monument.
2. The plan should include: what stone will be worked on, where the stone is located, who will be doing the work, what work will be done to the stone, what materials will be used, and when the proposed work will take place.
3. Work may start after written approval is granted from the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds with input from the HCAC.
4. All restoration and resetting work shall be done in accordance with standards established by the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) and the US Department of Veterans Affairs' National Cemetery Administration. An excellent source of information is "A Graveyard Preservation Primer" by Lynette Strangstad.
5. Original stone material will be maintained as much as possible.
6. Stabilization of existing stone material is preferable to the reconstruction of missing stone elements.
7. If a new stone is to replace an existing one it must match the original marker in terms of size, material, design, and setting.
8. If a new stone is to be created and the original material is no longer available, a replacement material may be acceptable if approved by the HCAC and the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds.
9. All work must be undertaken by an insured contractor.
10. The contractor must take steps to provide safety to the public during the restoration work.
11. Surrounding stones may not be disturbed as a result of the work.
12. Following the stone work, the immediate ground shall be restored to its pre-work condition or improved, and approved by the Supervisor of Grounds.
13. When the work is completed photographic documentation of the condition of the stone before and after restoration will be submitted to the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds.
14. The cost of the work will be the responsibility of the person or organization seeking the action.
15. Failure to comply with this policy may be considered vandalism and result in charges based on Rhode Island law 23-18-12***

* Braman Cemetery , Clifton Burial Ground/Golden Hill, Coddington/Governors Burying Ground , Coggeshall Burial Ground (owned by the city, maintained by PSNC), Common Burying Ground , John Clarke Burial Ground, Judge Anthony Wilbur Lot, North Common Burying Ground

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***** 23-18-12 Vandalism in cemetery – Civil penalties.**

Any person who shall be convicted of vandalism of cemetery property shall, in addition to any fine or penalty imposed by the court, pay treble damages to the agency whose cemetery sustained the damage. In the event the convicted offender is a minor, the family court may, if it determines that the juvenile is unable to pay treble damages, require the offender to perform specified work at the cemetery site where the damage was sustained for a period of time that in the court's opinion will equal treble the damages inflicted at the cemetery.

For additional information about our historic cemeteries visit <http://www.cityofnewport.com/departments/public-services/buildings-and-grounds>