

Fact Sheet #4

Proposed Southern Cemetery Frequently Asked Questions - Crematoria Services

Cremation is chosen by more than 50% of Australians as an alternative to conventional burial. In metropolitan areas this figure is often much higher with 60-80% of Australians choosing to be cremated. As such, cremation is one service that is being considered for inclusion at a new cemetery in the ACT.

There are approximately 90 crematoria in Australia. This means that there is one crematorium for every 250,000 people in Australia. The existing crematorium at Mitchell provides the sole cremation service across the Capital Region. The nearest other crematoria are located in Wagga Wagga, Bega and Broulee.

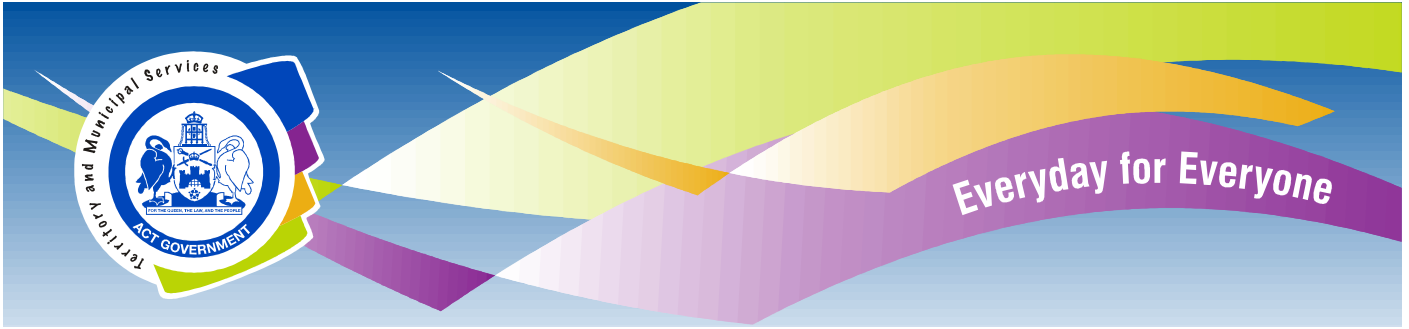
About 70% of Canberrans now choose to be cremated and any new cemetery would need to recognise that cremation is an important option. A new crematorium, and associated memorial areas, for southern Canberra would be more convenient for southern residents.

What is the environmental impact of a crematorium?

Generally the volume and type of emissions from a crematorium are considered relatively insignificant compared to other gas-fired facilities. Should community feedback support further consideration of the proposal to build a crematorium as a part of a new southern cemetery, a detailed assessment of emissions in the immediate and surrounding areas would be undertaken. This would inform a broader assessment of the environmental, social and economic impact of a crematorium.

Modern crematoria are constructed and landscaped to complement the surrounding environment. Some crematoria are constructed as part of a memorial hall while others are stand-alone buildings. Cremation interment and memorials, and the common practice of 'scattering ashes' uses significantly less, or negligible, space compared to other popular forms of burial.

Community Engagement



What environmental approvals are required?

The crematorium would need to meet or exceed all of the environmental standards set by the ACT Government's Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

In assessing the facility, the EPA would take into account the social, economic and environmental aspects of the crematorium. The ACT Heritage Unit and Parks, Conservation and Lands would also need to assess the proposal with regard to heritage and land use matters.

The operation of a crematorium is a Class A activity under the *Environment Protection Act 1997*, therefore the operator must obtain an Environmental Authorisation to operate the facility.

Where would a crematorium be located?

The Australasian Cemeteries and Crematoria Association Guidelines for a Crematorium recommend that cremators be located at least 200 metres from residences.

If a crematorium was located on the same site as the proposed cemetery it would be considerably further away than the recommended minimum distance.