

Major Trends Affecting Cremation

CANA's public statement on key cremation growth drivers

CANA frequently receives inquiries about why consumers choose cremation. Referencing the FAMIC Study,¹ CANA surveys and assessments, the Association has issued the following statement about the reasons for choosing cremation:

1. COST

Monetary implications are a key factor in most memorialization decisions, both from a cost and a value perspective. Cremation provides an affordable alternative to burial that many continue to find appealing. The median cost of cremation with limited memorialization services and a basic urn was \$2245. The median price ranges for memorial service or casketed funeral with viewing and cremation were \$3190 and \$4715, respectively.² The national median cost of a funeral with burial is \$8,343 before accounting for the gravesite, headstone, or grave marker.³ It is important to recognize that many aspects of a traditional funeral service are important to help families and loved ones deal with loss, and cost is not the only consideration when determining this end-of-life transition.

2. RANGE OF OPTIONS

Many people find that cremation opens up a wider range of memorialization options than traditional burials. Cremated remains can be placed in a single location (a gravesite or a columbarium), scattered at a favorite location (with appropriate permission from property owners), or divided and incorporated into keepsake urns, jewelry, and other items so that multiple family members may keep a loved one close.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In the United States, interest in environmentally conscious practices has been amplified across all industries including death services. Environmental considerations are becoming increasingly important to consumers and subsequently the cremation industry. Traditional burials require land consumption and cemetery maintenance into perpetuity.

4. GEOGRAPHY

Cremation allows people to easily transport their loved one's remains. Given our transient population, many families find that cremation enables them to return cremated remains from wherever their loved one has moved to wherever their loved one still considers "home." Returning a body is complicated and cumbersome; cremation serves as a simple solution that helps families fulfill a decedent's desire to return "home."

5. RELIGIOUS ACCEPTANCE

Many religions are becoming more tolerant of cremation and have begun to relax restrictions that once limited cremation as an option to many people. In some cases, churches have even begun to plan columbaria as part of the church property so those associated with the church can have their final resting place on church grounds.

¹"FAMIC Study," Funeral & Memorialization Information Council (FAMIC). 2010.

²"NFDA Member General Price List Study". National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA). 2010.

³"NFDA Member General Price List Study". National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA). 2012.

State	2012 % Cremations	2013 % Cremations	2018 % Cremations
Kansas	40.8%	41.2%	48.6%
Kentucky	22.4%	23.6%	29.9%
Louisiana	23.8%	25.1%	31.5%
Maine	68.2%	69.5%	75.6%
Maryland	36.8%	37.6%	42.8%
Massachusetts	41.3%	42.7%	49.6%
Michigan	50.7%	52.1%	59.5%
Minnesota	52.6%	55.4%	63.2%
Mississippi	17.7%	18.2%	24.2%
Missouri	36.8%	38.8%	46.4%
Montana	67.7%	69.4%	74.7%
Nebraska	40.0%	41.8%	49.7%
Nevada	74.2%	74.3%	76.5%
New Hampshire	66.7%	71.0%	74.1%
New Jersey	38.2%	39.9%	43.2%
New Mexico	54.4%	55.9%	61.7%
New York	36.6%	39.7%	46.8%
North Carolina	34.9%	36.5%	43.2%
North Dakota	32.9%	36.3%	43.4%
Ohio	39.2%	41.2%	47.9%
Oklahoma	35.0%	37.7%	43.2%
Oregon	73.2%	73.7%	77.9%
Pennsylvania	39.1%	40.4%	46.7%
Rhode Island	42.7%	48.7%	49.3%
South Carolina	33.2%	34.1%	40.6%
South Dakota	31.8%	32.3%	37.4%
Tennessee	27.0%	31.5%	41.4%
Texas	35.7%	37.6%	43.6%
Utah	27.5%	30.4%	32.2%
Vermont	63.6%	64.8%	70.7%
Virginia	35.6%	36.8%	42.6%
Washington	73.2%	73.7%	78.2%
West Virginia	26.8%	29.2%	36.7%
Wisconsin	49.1%	50.4%	58.3%
Wyoming	63.4%	66.2%	78.3%
United States Total	43.2%	45.1%	50.6%

Bold indicates predicted numbers; final data not yet available.