



Flower & Memorial Policy

Approved & Adopted by Board of Directors: June 13, 2022; Revised _____ 2024

The Board of Directors and staff of the Woodlake Public Cemetery District work diligently to beautify the cemetery grounds and have developed this Flower & Memorial Policy for the community to set and maintain aesthetic standards. This policy will also make the headstones more accessible for landscaping and equipment needs, and alleviate hazards. Cleaning, mowing, weed eating, blowing and general landscaping are ongoing and completed regularly. **The Cemetery District is not responsible for items left on headstones.** *Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we work diligently to restore the Woodlake Public Cemetery to its pristine beauty.*

Policy Implementation:

Community members will have one month (30 days) from the initial date this policy is adopted to comply. After 30 days, Woodlake Public Cemetery staff will begin full implementation of the revised Flower & Memorial Policy. The Woodlake Public Cemetery District, its employees, and Board of Directors are not liable or responsible for any items left on gravesites or headstones.

- **Gravesites without headstones must also comply with the Flower & Memorial Policy.**

Cemetery Cleaning Schedule:

On the first Monday and Tuesday of each month, Cemetery staff will remove ALL flowers from ALL headstones and gravesites throughout the Cemetery. ALL items will be removed from headstones and graves that are not in compliance with the Flower & Memorial Policy. If families would like to keep items, they must pick them up before the first Monday of each month and may bring them back after the monthly clean-up day. This schedule will help alleviate the accumulated litter of faded and old fake flowers and pedals, broken items and other items that blow about the grounds from headstones and will help with mosquito control in the Cemetery during the warmer months.

- Solar lights and personalized flags will be left in place if they are in compliance with the Flower & Memorial Policy. Any solar lights that are faded or broken will be removed.
- Flat vases with succulents or flowers planted will be left in place, if the headstone is in compliance with the Flower & Memorial Policy, and as long as the succulents or flowers are alive. Empty vases or vases with dead plants will be removed.
- The Woodlake Public Cemetery District and its employees are not responsible for any items left on gravesites or headstones.

Flower & Memorial Policy Rules:

- **Solar Lights:** Two (2) solar lights will be allowed per gravesite. If a family has two loved ones sharing a headstone, then four (4) lights will be allowed (two for each person who has passed away). Solar lights must be placed on the headstone or in the flower vases, and must be made of plastic material (no glass lights allowed). If you would like to have solar light(s), please contact the Cemetery Office to arrange for solar light holders to be drilled into the cement base. No items will be permitted to be staked around the headstone, including solar lights.
- **Balloons:** Balloons are not allowed. They deflate and hold water and are a significant landscaping safety hazard. Balloons will be immediately removed by Cemetery staff.

- **Rocks/Stones/Glass Pebbles/Marbles:** Rocks, stones, glass pebbles and/or marbles may not be placed around headstones or in vases, no exception. They are dangerous during landscape maintenance, posing a danger to Cemetery staff and the visiting public, and are not allowed. Any headstone found with rocks and/or stones and/or glass pebbles and/or marbles will have ALL items immediately removed, regardless of the date of the month.
- **Vases:** Only the built-in headstone vases can be used. There is an exception for headstones that do not have vases, and those families may place no more than two (2) non-breakable flat-bottom vases on the headstone. No glass vases are allowed.
- **Flowers:** Artificial or fresh flowers may be placed in vases on the headstones. Please remove plastic wrapping from fresh flowers before placing them on graves. To help prevent mosquito breeding, please limit water use in vases. Any flowers placed around the headstone in the ground will be removed immediately, regardless of the date of the month.
- **Statues, Trinkets, and Other Personal Items:** Please limit the number of statues, trinkets and/or personal items to no more than two (2) items per headstone or gravesite. These are considered "in addition to" flower vases. Any broken items will be removed from the headstones.
- **Flags/Crosses/Pin Wheels/Other Stick Decorations:** Flags, pin wheels and other decorations on a stick may be placed in vases on the headstones, this includes personalized flags and crosses. If it is not possible to place these items in a vase, please contact the Cemetery Office to arrange for a flag or cross holder to be drilled into the cement base. Crosses placed on gravesites without headstones may not be more than two (2) feet in height. No items will be permitted to be staked around the headstone, including flags, crosses, pin wheels and/or other stick decorations. The only exception will be Memorial Day weekend when crosses and American flags are placed at the graves of Veterans.
- **Confetti:** Confetti is NOT allowed to be sprinkled on headstones or graves. Any graves or headstones found to have confetti will have all items immediately removed from the headstone. Confetti is considered intentional littering.
- **Food or Drinks:** No food items (cakes, cupcakes, candy, chips, nuts, etc.) or drinks (sodas, water, juice, beer, hard liquor, etc.) are allowed to be left on headstones. Food items and drinks attract ants and squirrels, and cause foul smells after sitting in the sun. If found, they will be removed immediately by Cemetery staff.
- **Fencing:** No fencing is allowed around gravesites. Any fencing will be immediately removed.
- **Fake Grass & Sod:** Any fake grass is not allowed on gravesites, as this prohibits grass in the area to grow and interferes with landscaping maintenance. The installation of sod is not allowed. Cemetery staff overseeds gravesites and levels out sunken areas on a regular basis.
- **Items in Trees:** No items are allowed to be hung in trees, no exceptions. Any items found hanging or stored in trees will be removed immediately by Cemetery staff.
- **Rose Bushes/Trees/Etc.:** Rose bushes, trees, other bushes, garden plants, flowers, and seeds are not allowed to be planted on top of or at the head of graves. Families may donate flowers and trees to the cemetery for planting by the Cemetery staff. The Cemetery reserves the right to relocate any landscaping items planted without permission.
- **Items In or On the Ground:** No other items can be placed in or on the ground around headstones or gravesites without headstones, unless noted in the above rules. The only exception is during Memorial Day weekend when crosses and American flags are placed at the graves of Veterans.
- **Dia de los Muertos:** The Cemetery Board of Directors and staff will relax the rules for decorating during Dia de los Muertos for the month of November. All decorations must be removed prior to November 30 each year. Any items Dia de los Muertos items remaining on headstones or gravesites without headstones will be removed on the first Monday of December.

For questions or clarification on the Flower & Memorial, please contact Trilby Barton, District Manager of the Woodlake Public Cemetery, at (559) 564-2571 or email manager@woodlakecemetery.com.