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Green burials gaining momentum

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By TOM HARRIS
KVUE News

The death of a loved one is often very painful and costly. However, there is a new option being offered for people looking for a final resting place that is both economical and environmentally-friendly.

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The option is a green burial.

Texan George Russell donated the land for the Ethician Family Cemetery. It's for green burials only -- meaning no embalming fluid, no air tight caskets and no burial vaults.

"Why would you want to create a toxic wasteland? Why would you want to waste tons of bronze and concrete and all that stuff? What are you doing down there? You think granny is having a picnic? She turns into a toxic pickle," Russell said.

Russell opened the cemetery to people of all faiths, "If we are all God's children than we are all God's children. We have members who are atheist, Buddhist and even Muslim."

Green cemeteries are common in the United Kingdom. The first official one opened in the United States in South Carolina in 1996.

Green burials are legal in at least eight other states.

In Texas, the average burial costs around \$5,000 to \$6,000.

At the Ethician Family Cemetery, people are just asked to make a donation in whatever amount they can afford.

"If you don't have any money we will give you a place for free. I don't believe my church doesn't believe of profiteering off of death," said Russell.

Sollie Jackson, Jr., 57, has already picked out his spot in the Ethician Family Cemetery. He admits he has no insurance or burial plan.

"Whatever money is going to be spent -- \$20,000 to \$30,000 -- I would rather my family have the money to eat and pay their bills because this is going to have to be done after I am gone," Jackson said.

Texas law states a family can bury a loved one without hiring a funeral director. However, a statement of death and a death certificate are legally required.

[Natural burial information](#)

People living in urban areas should check local city ordinances.

A green burial may not be for everyone, but for some it does have its advantages.

They say it's not only more economical, but it's also a way to make sure your final resting place is one that gives back to nature in it's purest form.

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[Randy Fraga](#) 3 days ago wrote:



I understand the rite of passage that goes with funerals, but the industry has made it a guaranteed source of large amounts of income from the grieving. Air tight caskets? for what? Why is it bad for us to decay? What are we saving our bodies for. It's not like we are going to visit it later. It's underground. For all the money we spend on embalming, we should have a way to go see our dead from time to time. Ludicrous. I just want to be set aside and let to decay without all the money. Life costs so much, why should death? After all, I'm not going to feel anything. Use my funeral money and take a nice trip through nature with it.

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[tinker66](#) 4 days ago wrote:



Great idea. I have never understood the hoopla surrounding funerals. We are dead, it is not a fashion show! Personally, strip me naked, make me into ashes then feed me to the fish and birds. :)

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[dlmgamos](#) 4 days ago wrote:



When my mother and I had to bury my father is was so costly and we had to go as cheap as possible because we had to buy the plot and casket and casket cover and all the other expenses came out to over 14000.00 for one person! Luckily she had a buriel insurance

on him or she wouldnt have been able to bury him with dignity. Any one wanting to continue to take care of a loved one even after burial is what makes death accepting. Its hard on the family and even harder because it is soo expensive.

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[Bike austin](#) 4 days ago wrote:



why does one take pleasure in death?

HOW ABOUT LIFE

I LOVE toxic Pickels where do i sign UP lol

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[bdwaustin](#) 4 days ago wrote:



airtight vaults etc are ridiculous! I am curious who decided that was a good idea anyway!!!!!! It does not prevent decay only delays it.

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