

Visalia Public Cemetery District

## Flower and Memorial Policy

Original 8-17-1994, Updated 12-27-2017, Updated 7-28-2021

This policy is necessary to aid in the preservation of the aesthetic beauty of our cemetery and the need to reduce standing water to eliminate dangerous breeding mosquitoes. This policy also helps to ensure the safety of those that visit and those that maintain the grounds.

Clean up, mowing, edging, blowing, and landscaping are done on an ongoing and daily basis in coordination with the burial schedule.

Only the gravestone vases can be used and there are replacement vases available in the cemetery office. Donations are welcomed to offset the cost of the vases. There is an exception for gravestones that do not have vases; those families may place 1 non-breakable flat bottom vase on the gravestone.

Artificial or fresh flowers or decorations on a stick such as pin wheels or flags may be placed in the vases on the gravestones/markers. To aid in the prevention of mosquito breeding no water or floral foam can be used in vases. Vases must be filled with sand, kitty litter or super absorbent polyacrylamide or turned over. Sand is available for the public's use through-out the cemetery. Balloons are not allowed since they deflate and hold water and can also be a landscaping safety hazard.

**Nothing should be placed on the gravestone/marker that may soak up or hold water. If items are left on the gravestone/marker, edging will only be done if it is safe to do so and blowing will not be done to ensure items are not knocked over or off the gravestone/marker.**

Nothing can be placed in or on the ground around graves or gravestones/markers. There is an exception for the flags placed by the Avenue of Flags volunteers over the Memorial Day Weekend.

Flowers left on graves with no gravestone/marker may be moved to allow staff access to perform their burial, landscaping, and cleaning duties. Nothing is to be placed in the ground, vases are not to be used and the paper, foil or plastic wrap needs to be removed from the flowers.

Flowers and decorations may be removed by cemetery staff as they become unsightly. Anything that is left in the cemetery that does not comply with this policy and/or is deemed unsanitary, unsafe or if it causes a burial, landscaping or mowing safety hazard will be removed and may be disposed of by staff.

Anyone wishing to donate plants/trees/seed may do so, however all placement, planting and seeding will be done by cemetery staff.

The cemetery district staff understand and appreciate the role that personal items left on the gravestone/marker plays in the grieving and remembrance process for the family **however, the cemetery district and its employees will not be responsible for lost, misplaced, damaged or stolen items.** Anyone not authorized by the cemetery district that removes items from gravesites that are not their own will be reported to the Visalia Police Department and may be subject to prosecution per Penal Codes 484 & 594 and Health and Safety Code 8102 and any others that may apply.