

Welcome to the Spanish Fork City Cemetery

10-20-20

The Spanish Fork City Cemetery is considered a public park. All rules, laws, and regulations in the Spanish Fork City Municipal Code that apply to public parks also apply to the Cemetery.

Cemetery Hours of Operation

The cemetery grounds are open every day of the year including holidays. Cemetery grounds hours are from Dawn to Dusk. The vehicle entrance gates are closed and locked each day at dark. **Office Hours are from 7:30 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday, closed on city observed holidays.** Hours of Operation and cemetery sexton contact information are posted on the Records Building at 420 South 400 East, Spanish Fork, Utah 84660.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome and encouraged to walk the grounds. Animals, at large or restrained to a leash are not permitted in the cemetery as posted and in accordance to Spanish Fork Municipal Code 6.08.160. The water in the hydrants located throughout the cemetery is non potable and is intended for irrigation only. Do not drink the water from these hydrants.

General Information

The first burial at the Spanish Fork City Cemetery was in 1853. The cemetery was officially established in 1868 with the design and formation of blocks one through four. The cemetery has over 26,000 burial positions spanning 32 acres. This total count includes Occupied, Reserved and Available positions.

Spanish Fork City has planned ahead to expand the cemetery into Centennial Park when necessary. In 2014 the Cemetery did expand almost 2 acres into Centennial Park providing nearly 1,600 new positions, some of which became available for sale in July, 2020. A "loop road" was constructed in 2019 providing access to additional burial positions adjacent to 400 South Street. Some of these positions became available for sale in July, 2020. Based on the current burial space inventory and the rate of sales it is expected this additional expansion will begin in the year 2030.

The Cemetery Division is responsible for serving city residents and other patrons concerning their interment needs for loved ones. The Cemetery personnel are known for their extreme care and sensitivity to patrons and visitors alike. In addition to these duties,

the Cemetery Division also maintains burial records and is charged with the duties relevant to the sale of burial spaces to the general public.

The Cemetery Division is also responsible for the perpetual maintenance of the City Cemetery grounds which include irrigation, mowing, trimming, tree care, turf care, maintenance of service roads, and general upkeep of the grounds.

Purchase of Burial Positions

In addition to the purchase of a standard burial position, patrons have the option of purchasing a single burial space that will contain two burials, the second burial over the top of the first. In this case, the grave is closed following the first burial and then opened again, at a later date, when needed for the second burial. This is termed a “double deep” burial.

The sexton has a list of burial positions that are available for sale. The cemetery has four categories of burial positions:

1. Standard interment
2. Double Deep Interment
3. Cremains interment
4. Small Child or Infant interment

Individuals come to the cemetery and meet with the sexton to decide the location of the positions they would like to purchase. The sexton will write down the Block, Lot and Position numbers for the individuals and then the individuals go to the city offices and pay for the positions. Full purchase price is required at the time of the sale. Partial payments are not accepted.

A Certificate of Burial Right, sometimes called a Deed, is then created by a city secretary that identifies the positions that have been purchased. A copy of the Certificate of Burial Right is mailed to the purchaser and an additional copy is kept in the city offices.

Upon completion of the purchase procedures the sexton makes a plot sheet listing the positions purchased and the owner of the positions. The plot sheet is filed in the cemetery records office and used for recording the future grave assignments of the positions purchased by the plot sheet owner.

Find the current fee schedule at

https://www.spanishfork.org/departments/parks_and_recreation/cemetery/rates.php

Cemetery Layout and Burials

The cemetery is arranged in **blocks, lots and positions**. The cemetery contains 35 **blocks** that vary in size and shape, containing as many as 66 lots with the smallest block containing just 10 lots. Typically, all lots in the cemetery are arranged to include 24 burial positions. Each standard burial **position** is 4 feet wide and 9 feet long, creating a burial **lot** that is 32 feet long and 27 feet wide. Depending on the location in the cemetery, some exceptions are lots that contain from 1 to 23 burial positions. (See Cemetery Gravesite and Burial Policies and Procedures:

https://www.spanishfork.org/document_center/Parks%20&%20Recreation/cemetery/Gravesite_Policies.pdf)

There is a corresponding plot sheet for each lot that lists the plot ownership and who is buried on that property. Each individual position has a designated *block.lot.position* number and is identifiable on a corresponding map of the cemetery. The same information is recorded in the city's computer system. Before digging begins for a burial, the plot sheet is used to identify and double-check the proper burial location.

In most cases, the mortuary instigates the burial process. The mortuary contacts the cemetery sexton to give him the name of the person to be buried and to inform him when the burial is scheduled. If it is necessary for the deceased's family to first purchase property and pay cemetery fees, the mortuary directs the family to contact the cemetery sexton to conduct that business. This coordination generally takes place at least three (3) days prior to the burial.

The Spanish Fork City Cemetery website contains burial position search and location capabilities at https://www.spanishfork.org/departments/parks_and_recreation/cemetery/

The Spanish Fork City Municipal Code concerning cemeteries is located on the city website at https://spanishfork.municipalcodeonline.com/book?type=ordinances#name=7.04_Cemeteries

Opening and Closing of a Grave

Digging of the grave begins once the location of the grave has been established. A typical grave is opened 40 inches wide and 96 inches long. A template is used that measures the size of the grave. The template is cut around and the grass is lifted by using hand spades or a motorized sod cutter. The grass is preserved and set off to the side to be replaced after the grave is completed. All full-sized graves are dug with the use of a backhoe. If required, headstones are set aside to provide access for the backhoe to dig the grave.

There is no specific depth that the grave has to be dug. Graves should be deep enough to ensure that there is sufficient room for the soil and grass to be placed over the vault after it has been placed in the grave to maintain protection of the vault and allow the grass to grow properly. Double deep burials require the first vault to be buried deep enough so that the burial of the second vault will still leave sufficient room for the soil and grass to be placed over the vault and allow the grass to grow properly. The soil removed from the hole is stored on the property at a remote location leaving the area around the gravesite level. Plywood is placed over the opening until the vault company arrives.

On the day of the burial the selected vault company arrives many hours in advance to set the vault and equipment in the opening and make the gravesite presentable for the service. Cemetery personnel are trained to assist the vault company in placing the vault into the grave prior to the graveside service and to assist in the graveside setup. The vault company places aluminum planking covered with artificial grass mats around the opening to prevent soil and people from slipping into the hole making the area as attractive and as safe as possible. They typically erect a shade tent with seating for the family of the deceased. The vault company personnel usually stand by until the graveside service is over, and then they complete the casket lowering and vault sealing processes.

After the vault lid is in place the cemetery staff shovel soil into the hole with the use of hand shovels making sure that the soil around the sides of the vault are tamped to prevent the ground from sinking. A motorized compactor is used to compact the soil. Once the grass has been placed on the grave the grass and soil are compacted to level the burial spot to the original elevation. The grave is then complete.

Graveside Services

Cemetery employees will assist the family and funeral director in any way possible during a graveside service. The operation of lawnmowers and other equipment will be discontinued if the noise they generate distracts from the graveside service. Cemetery employees will not approach the gravesite until the family has left the area. The cemetery sexton will provide protocol training to the other cemetery employees regarding these matters.

Grave Marker Placement

see Cemetery Gravesite and Burial Policies and Procedures page at https://www.spanishfork.org/document_center/Parks%20&%20Recreation/cemetery/Gravesite_Policies.pdf

Decorations (including Shepherd Hooks) and Flowers on Graves

See Cemetery Decorations Policies and Procedures page at

https://www.spanishfork.org/document_center/Parks%20&%20Recreation/cemetery/Decorations_Policies.pdf

Tree, Shrub and Flower Planting and Care

See Cemetery Decorations Policies and Procedures page at

https://www.spanishfork.org/document_center/Parks%20&%20Recreation/cemetery/Decorations_Policies.pdf

Mowing and Trimming

The cemetery has gasoline-powered riding lawnmowers that are used to mow the cemetery's grass. Excess grass around the grave markers is removed through the use of hand-held string trimmers. Generally, the cemetery is mowed and trimmed weekly from March through October.

Irrigation

All watering is done by an automatic sprinkling system that is connected to a timing controller. The cemetery sexton is in charge of the watering schedule. Other spot sprinkling with hoses is done within the cemetery as needed.

Snow Removal

All snow removal from the streets within the cemetery is the responsibility of the Parks Department and cemetery personnel. When snow must be removed around a gravesite for a burial, the cemetery staff creates enough open space to accommodate those who may be attending a service.

Road Maintenance

Cemetery personnel maintain the service roads within the cemetery. If new roads are necessary or if problems exist that cemetery personnel cannot repair the City Street Department will be asked to assist. If new roads are paved or if general paving is done it is done through the City Street Department or bid out commercially.

Equipment Maintenance

Light equipment maintenance is performed by cemetery personnel following manufacturer's recommendations. If major maintenance is required, it is done by the city mechanics. Records are kept for any maintenance or repairs that are done.

Cemetery Complex

The Cemetery Records Building includes an office, workshop, and two garage bays. This building houses all equipment, tools, office supplies, and cemetery supplies. General building maintenance is performed by cemetery staff. Other city or commercial entities provide assistance for those situations that require attention beyond the cemetery staff's ability to address.

Staff Training

Cemetery personnel take advantage of all general training that is provided by the City. Specialized staff training is done by the cemetery sexton or individuals appointed by the sexton. Training elements include equipment operation, safety procedures, customer relations, cemetery etiquette, and so forth.