

NCPTT AT ISSUE:

POINTS OF INTEREST FOR THE FIELD OF PRESERVATION TECHNOLOGY



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Center for
Preservation Technology
and Training

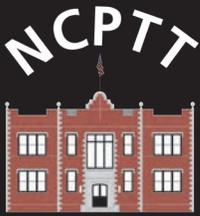
Disaster Response Tips for Cemeteries

- Before beginning work, establish ownership of property and permission to perform work.
- Before entering the cemetery, be conscious of dangers, including the following:
 - ◆ Electrical wires and gas lines,
 - ◆ Physical dangers; such as debris, fallen or uprooted trees, sink holes, unstable monuments,
 - ◆ Chemicals and contaminants,
 - ◆ Wildlife: snakes, rabid animals, etc.
- The **FIRST** priority of any project is safety of the workers. **Extra precautions** must be taken in areas affected by contaminants.
 - ◆ Be sure all necessary shots are current: tetanus, hepatitis, etc.
 - ◆ Wear suitable gloves: leather for heavy work and chemical/solvent resistant if sensitive to cleansers.
 - ◆ Eye protection: may include safety glasses.
 - ◆ Masks; such as a respirator may be required when dealing with mold spores.
 - ◆ Protective clothing: long sleeves, pants, steel-toed boots, or Tyvek suits may be necessary.
- Remove or stabilize anything that may pose a danger to workers.
 - ◆ Water and/or wind may cause monuments to shift, creating unstable monuments/structures.
 - * **Stabilizing** monuments may include bracing problem areas with wood, packing dirt where it has been washed away, or using shims (preferably slate) to level monuments.
 - **DO NOT** attempt to stabilize monuments without the proper tools (winches, hoists, etc.), safety precautions and knowledge.
 - All stabilization should be performed by a crew of two or more depending on job.
- Assess damage to monuments and structures ([See Rapid Cemetery Assessment form](#)).
 - ◆ Before, during and after work begins, photograph and create written documentation on the condition of and repairs to be made to the cemetery as whole as well as individual lots.
 - * Photographs should include an overall view of the lot and the areas that were damaged.
 - * Written documentation should identify the monument/structure, its location, material of which it is constructed, damage and repairs or treatments utilized.
 - * Multiple copies should be made of all information and be housed in different locations (*possibly local or state historical society, courthouse or library of associated religious house*).
- Consider treatments, knowledge, and skills of the people performing the work.
 - ◆ Gently cleaning stones can be done by most people after receiving instructions on proper techniques.
 - * Wet the stone thoroughly (*water source or large amounts of **clean water** are required*).
 - * Apply the cleaner with soft bristle brush, gently scrubbing in a circular motion.
 - Cleaners should be gentle, non-ionic and a neutral PH, such as
 - ✦ Kodak Photo Flo, Orvus W A Paste, among others.
 - Biocides can be used to assist in the removal of biological growth, such as
 - ✦ D-2 Antimicrobial, Enviro Klean Biowash, etc.
 - * Work from the bottom up, not allowing the cleaner to dry on the stone.
 - If cleaner dries on the stone, streaking may appear. If this occurs consult a professional conservator.
 - * Rinse thoroughly, removing all cleanser from the stone.
 - ◆ **DO NOT** use power tools (drill, cup brush), metal or hard tools (metal brush, files), power washing, sandblasting, or harsh abrasives (bleach, household cleaners) when cleaning stones.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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If the stone is fragile (weathered, cracked, spalling, sugaring etc.) and cleaning could cause further damage or repairs are needed, consulting a professional conservator is recommended



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Disaster Response for Cemeteries Resources

Sources for Supplies

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Brushes

Soft bristle brushes are required when cleaning stones. Vegetable brushes or soft grooming brushes for large animals are a few that can be found in chain or farm supply stores. All rough or metal edges must be covered with tape to reduce the chance of scratching the stone.

Cleaner

Cleaning stones should always be done by the gentlest means possible. When choosing a cleaner it should be gentle, non-ionic, and have a neutral PH. Products like Kodak Photo Flo are available in many photography supply stores. Products like Orvus W A Paste are available in many farm supply stores. These are just a few of the brands available that could be used.

Biocides

Biocides are available for use on stones that have significant biological growth. If more than 50 percent of the stone is covered, gently remove loose growth before wetting the stone. Follow directions as specified by the biocide manufacturer, making sure to rinse thoroughly. D-2 Antimicrobial and Enviro Klean Biowash are only a few of the brands available commercially.

Safety glasses, gloves, and masks

Many of the safety supplies suggested are available for purchase at building supply, hardware, and some large chain stores.

Additional Information

Association for Gravestone Studies

Phone: (413) 772-0836

Website: www.gravestonestudies.com

Chicora Foundation

Phone: (803) 787-6910

Website: www.chicora.org

Harpers Ferry Center, National Parks Service

Website: <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/cons/wet-recovery.htm#>

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