

Guidelines for Disposing or Recycling of Crematory Metals

Licensees periodically contact the program office asking for advice about the disposition of crematory metals, such as screws, hinges, prosthetic implants (knee and hip joints etc) that are not consumed during the cremation process. The recent emphasis has been on the recycling of these metals for compensation or the offering of a donation to a charitable organization of your choice.

The Washington State Funeral and Cemetery Board recommends the following:

- Clearly disclose to the consumer what you intend to do with metals left over after the cremation process. If your cremation authorization form does not currently have a disclosure concerning this issue, add a simple disclosure or create an addendum to your current authorization form.
- Obtain permission to dispose of or recycle crematory metals from the person that has the right to control the disposition of human remains. Since you already obtain a signature(s) from the person(s) having the right to control the disposition of human remains, a disclosure or addendum would be part of what the consumer agrees to upon signing the document.
- If the disposition disclosure is not specific, disclose that the metals will be disposed of in any legal manner and will be non-recoverable.
- If the disposition includes recycling, disclose the nature of the recycling, including any compensation that will be paid directly to you or donated to a charitable organization, if that option is available.
- If you receive compensation from the recycling of crematory metals, clearly disclose the financial benefit you are receiving.
- As a best practice, to avoid any appearance that you stand to benefit financially from the recycling of crematory metals, it is best to disclose that your funeral home or crematory operation is not benefiting from the recycling effort.