

Mass Fatality Management

Policy Issues for Consideration

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Surge Capacity

By

John H. Fitch, Jr.

National Funeral Directors Association

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General Funeral Industry Standards & Statistics

- The number of deaths for the United States in 2007 was 2,414,534.
- 30% of the dispositions were cremations and 70% were earth burials.
- There are 21,495 funeral homes, 25,000 cemeteries (including all national and state owned/managed) and 2,000 crematories in the United States.
- The average funeral homes handles 112 calls per year and employees 3 full-time and 3 part-time employees.
- It takes an average of 2-4 hours to cremate one body.
- It takes an average of 1.5-2 hours to embalm a body.

Reasons Why We Process Remains

- Establish Cause and Manner of Death
- Obtain Victim Identification
- Issuance of Death Certificate
- Closure of Victim Estate
- Adherence to Religious Practice
- Acknowledgement of Societal Experience/Impact
- Next of Kin Influence of Political Officers
- Securing Public Health & Safety
- ***Because it is the Right Thing to Do***

What Are The Issues?

- **How are we going to handle the dignified recovery, storage, identification and processing of remains as well as the timely issuance of death certificates and the orderly conduct of the funeral and final disposition especially during surge situations?**
- **Funeral homes, cemeteries, crematories and morgues and their suppliers should be included as a priority for logistical and workforce support and protection, including vaccinations and personal protective equipment, during emergency situations that may involve quarantines, restrictions on transportation, travel and public gatherings as well as the actual conduct of the funeral and final disposition.**
- **Temporary suspension of certain federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations governing the conduct or practice of funeral directing, cemetery or crematory operations and which may otherwise hinder the proper conduct of fatality services in an emergency situation. These would include but not be limited to the FTC Funeral Rule, various workplace, wage and hour and environmental policies.**

Challenges Facing Funeral Service During a Mass Fatality Event

- The capacity to conduct normal operations in a surge environment and with a reduced skilled workforce. This is especially critical in rural areas where the proximity to other funeral homes, health facilities, nursing homes, crematories and cemeteries and the ability to quickly and easily share workers, vehicles, facilities to conduct embalmings, funeral services and final dispositions in a timely manner will be a significant issue.
- The ability to meet the expectations of the families of the deceased who die either from the event or normally and who demand that the funeral director fulfill his/her obligation to conduct a funeral and final disposition in accordance with their wishes.

What Kind of Help Do You Need From Local, State & Federal Gov ?

More than anything, it is critical that all parties involved, government and private sector, recognize the needs of the family and the importance of the funeral ceremony and final disposition to them when establishing policies and procedures for handling mass fatalities.

QUESTIONS?

Contact Information:

Jfitch@nfda.org

202-547-0441