

Adelaide Cemeteries - Environmental Initiatives

South Australians are committed to the environment and have a reputation as leaders in innovative and responsible waste management.

In keeping with our reputation, Adelaide Cemeteries has moved to ban helium balloons from its cemeteries. In July last year, Adelaide Cemeteries Authority (the Authority) became the first cemetery in Australia to obtain the International Standard, ISO140001 Environmental Management accreditation. This standard means the Authority is committed to improving its environmental performance over time.

Recognising we have a number of areas for improvement, the banning of helium balloons is one of the first initiatives undertaken to improve our environmental performance.

Adelaide Cemeteries has actioned this for several reasons.

Firstly, balloons are classified as 'rubbish' under environmental protection legislation. Balloons do not break down quickly when deflated and pollute the environment.

Secondly, two of the Authority's cemeteries, Enfield Memorial Park and West Terrace Cemetery are located under aeroplane flight paths. Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) approval is required before releasing helium balloons at these cemeteries. On given days, Cheltenham Cemetery and Smithfield Memorial Park may also have flight path related restrictions. The banning of helium balloons will help reduce the risk of these being released without CASA approval.

Thirdly, helium is a declining global natural resource.

Adelaide Cemeteries asks for cooperation from families, loved ones, funeral directors, and the community to please not release helium balloons as part of funeral services or attach them to headstones or memorials. We appreciate this request may disappoint some people, but we believe there are alternate ways of paying respects that are sustainable and just as meaningful.

Over the coming 12 to 24 months, with ongoing communication and industry support, we hope that families and loved ones will phase out releasing helium balloons in our cemeteries, and also cease attaching helium balloons on monuments and memorials.

Adelaide Cemeteries is also committed to eliminating plastic flowers from its cemeteries by 2026. Sadly, at present plastic flowers ultimately end up being disposed to landfill. This will be a long-term challenge and we are committed to finding alternate options for families and loved ones visiting our cemeteries.

These initiatives are in keeping with our new Enfield Memorial Park facility which has commenced construction. The new cremators installed will be fitted with emission filtration systems that will reduce cremation and Nitrogen Oxide emissions by up to 95%. The Enfield Crematorium will be the first in the southern hemisphere fitted with these filtration systems and comply with the stringent European emission standards. It is the Authority's view that these standards will ultimately come into legislation and be required for all crematoria.

With community and stakeholder support and cooperation Adelaide Cemeteries can reduce our environmental impact. If you have any queries regarding the helium balloon ban or our move to eliminate plastic flowers, please do not hesitate to contact Adelaide Cemeteries on 8139 7400.

Yours sincerely

Robert Pitt
Chief Executive Officer