

General Cemetery Etiquette

CHAPTER 12.15.040:

All visitors shall follow all rules and regulations herein and strive to assist in West Point City's goal of operating and maintaining a cemetery that is beautiful, dignified, and an appropriate final resting place for loved ones. Visitors are encouraged and expected to show proper respect for both the living and those interred by adhering to the following general guidelines:

- A.** Do not touch any monuments or markers without permission and do not remove any decorations or objects placed thereupon.
- B.** Children are encouraged to visit the cemetery, but parents are advised to keep them nearby and not to let them play on any of the monuments or markers. Teaching children to have respect for any cemetery is encouraged. While it is an important open space, a cemetery is not a playground and should not be treated as such.
- C.** If a funeral is occurring, consider visiting at another time. Never block or impede funeral processions.
- D.** Always strive to be respectful by keeping voices low and avoiding bad language; people may be within earshot seeking solace. Do not talk on a cell phone, as voices tend to carry in open spaces.
- E.** No loud music shall be played, including while driving or parking in the Cemetery.
- F.** Do not leave trash or other such items behind. Litter shows disrespect to those who come to visit the cemetery as well as to the cemetery officials striving to maintain the cleanliness of the cemetery.
- G.** Dogs and other pets are prohibited.
- H.** Report incidents of vandalism or theft to the police or to the cemetery administrator.
- I.** When visiting the cemetery by car, follow the roadways, watch out for pedestrians and people who may not be paying attention, drive slowly, and remain off the grass. If the lane is narrow and another car approaches, offer to move your car until they can get through.
- J.** As a general rule, it is best not to approach strangers as they may prefer to be left alone within the peace of their surroundings; of course, it is perfectly acceptable to offer help to anyone who is seemingly in need.

Decorations and Maintenance

CHAPTER 12.15.130:

A. Decorations are subject to the following restrictions at all times:

1. No person(s) shall erect a fence, coping, or corner post, or plant trees, flowers, shrubbery, hedges, or other boundary marker or obstruction upon any burial plot(s) or lot, nor grade the ground thereof. Any such obstructions in the cemetery shall be removed under the direction of the city manager or his designee. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the planting and maintaining of trees, shrubs, flowers, bushes, fences and other installations by the city manager or his designee in his official capacity. [Ord. 02-17-2015A § 1; Ord. 05-05-2009. Code 2000 § 12-3-16].
2. **In no case may decorations encroach onto other positions or plots.**
3. **All decorations shall be placed only upon the primary monument or marker or mow strip**, except as provided in subsection B of this section and the following:
 - a. Funeral flowers, floral pieces, or decorations may remain on the burial space for two (2) weeks following the interment. If not removed, these will be removed and discarded without notice by cemetery officials when they become unsightly or after two (2) weeks, whichever may occur first.
4. Pinwheels, shepherd's hooks, and other fixtures that are inserted into the ground must be placed within two inches (2") of the mow strip and shall not extend over or cover any ground that is outside of the burial plot space.
5. **Solar lights are permitted if they are mounted on the concrete mow strip or inserted within two inches (2") of the mow strip, except as prohibited during the mowing season as outlined in subsection B of this section.**
6. **A total of two shepherd's hooks may be placed on the north and/or south of the plot monument or marker but must be within two inches (2") of the mow strip.** Permanent holes for shepherd's hooks may also be drilled into the north and/or south mow strips within four inches (4") of the monument or marker. Shepherd's hooks are not permitted on secondary markers. Shepherd's hooks, including decorations placed thereon, may not exceed thirty-six inches (36") in height.
7. Decorations may not exceed thirty-six inches (36") in height, measured from the ground to the top of the decoration, except as provided in this section. Helium-filled balloons may exceed this height but may be removed at any time by cemetery officials after forty-eight (48) hours.
8. Decorations may be placed on the secondary, flat marker that is located on a burial plot position the week immediately before and the week immediately after Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day. Decorations not removed within one week following these holidays may be removed without notice at the sole discretion of cemetery officials. No decorations shall be placed upon secondary markers at all other times.
9. **Perishable food items placed on a monument or marker shall be removed within forty-eight (48) hours and may only be placed upon the monument or marker and shall not encroach onto other positions or plots.**
10. **Items from any food consumed in the cemetery (containers, utensils, leftovers, etc.) shall be removed immediately after consumption.** Patrons should take care to honor the sanctity of the cemetery and assist in all efforts to maintain a clean and well-groomed sanctuary in respect of the loved ones interred.
11. **No alcohol, cigarettes, drug paraphernalia, etc.,** shall be brought into the cemetery or placed upon any monument or marker.

12. Other decorations that utilize wires, pegs, glass, or other containers that may pose safety hazards shall not be permitted in the cemetery.
13. Arbors are not permitted. These items or similar items will be removed and discarded by cemetery officials without giving notice.
14. Artificial (dried, silk, or plastic) flower decorations and any fresh cut flowers are permitted in a sunken vase at any time but will be removed when they become unsightly or during the complete cemetery cleanings. Flower pots, baskets, holders and monument or decorations are permitted on the headstone, shepherd's hooks, or mow strip, except as prohibited in subsection B of this section.
15. **At the sole discretion of cemetery officials, all items that appear unsightly or cause interference with maintenance may be removed and discarded without notice.**

B. Decorations are subject to the following restrictions during the "Mowing Season" (defined as annually beginning April 1 and ending October 1), except as provided in subsections A(3)&(8) of this section:

1. **No decorations or items may be placed on any part of the plot other than the monument or marker during the mowing season.** Any decorations placed upon the mow strip may be removed and discarded by city officials at any time and without notice if such decorations interfere with the maintenance and landscaping, except as provided in subsection B(4) of this section.
2. **Fragile decorations that are easily broken or damaged, such as solar lights and items made of fragile materials (i.e., glass, porcelain, ceramic, and similar) are not permitted to be placed upon or around any monument, marker, mow strip, or plot space within the cemetery.** If such items are placed, the city is not responsible for any damage caused and such items may be removed and discarded at any time without notice.
3. **Decorations placed upon primary monuments or markers may be removed at any time and without notice if such items interfere with maintenance or landscaping.**
4. During the mowing season, decorations may be placed upon the mow strip and within two-inches (2") of the mow strip for the week before and the week after Memorial Day and Independence Day. In no case may decorations encroach onto other plots. Items not removed within one week following these holidays may be removed and discarded without notice by cemetery officials.
5. Secondary, flat markers that are located on burial plots may not have any decorations placed directly on them, except for the week before and the week after Memorial Day and Independence Day. At all other times decorations should be placed upon the primary monument or marker.

C. A complete cemetery cleaning and detailing will take place twice each year on the first Thursday in May and the first Thursday in October (weather permitting). Before detailing dates, cemetery patrons should remove all decorations they do not want discarded. All decorations will be removed and possibly discarded by cemetery officials at that time. At the sole discretion of cemetery officials, items deemed of value will be stored for one month and released to the owner by the cemetery administrator.

D. During the winter months, cemetery maintenance will be performed on an as-needed basis, weather permitting. **Any decorations deemed to be unsightly by cemetery officials will be discarded at any time and without notice.**

- a. All winter holiday decorations not removed within two (2) weeks following the winter holiday season (defined as ending January 2nd of each year) may be removed and discarded at the sole discretion of cemetery officials.

E. The cemetery accepts no responsibility or liability, nor will accept any claims against it, for loss or destruction of personal property left in the cemetery, and disclaims all responsibility for loss or damage from causes beyond its reasonable control, and, especially, from damage caused by the elements, an act of God, common enemy, thieves, vandals, explosions, invasions, insurrections, riots, or order of any military or civil authority, whether the damage be direct or collateral, other than as herein provided. [Ord. 08-06-2013B § 1 (Exh. A); Ord. 06-19-2012A § 1 (Exh. A); Ord. 01-15-2008 § 2. Code 2000 § 12-3-11].