

# STATE OF NEW YORK

7822

## IN SENATE

February 25, 2020

Introduced by Sen. COMRIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the not-for-profit corporation law, in relation to the creation, operation, and duties of natural organic reduction facilities as cemetery corporations

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Paragraphs (a), (m), (n) and (o) of section 1502 of the  
2 not-for-profit corporation law, paragraph (a) as added by chapter 871 of  
3 the laws of 1977, paragraphs (m), (n) and (o) as added by chapter 579 of  
4 the laws of 2006, are amended and two new paragraphs (t) and (u) are  
5 added to read as follows:

6 (a) The term "cemetery corporation" means any corporation formed under  
7 a general or special law for the disposal or burial of deceased human  
8 beings, by cremation, natural organic reduction or in a grave, mausole-  
9 um, vault, columbarium or other receptacle but does not include a family  
10 cemetery corporation or a private cemetery corporation.

11 (m) The term "holding facility" or "temporary storage facility" means  
12 an area that (i) is designated for the retention of human remains prior  
13 to cremation or natural organic reduction; (ii) complies with all appli-  
14 cable public health laws, (iii) preserves the health and safety of the  
15 crematory or natural organic reduction facility personnel; and (iv) is  
16 secure from access by anyone other than authorized persons. The interior  
17 of such facility shall not be visible from any area accessible to the  
18 general public.

19 (n) The ~~term~~ terms "cremation permit" ~~means~~ and "natural organic  
20 reduction permit" mean the burial and removal permit required pursuant  
21 to section forty-one hundred forty-five of the public health law that is  
22 annotated for disposition of the remains of a deceased human being by  
23 cremation or natural organic reduction.

24 (o) The ~~term~~ terms "cremation authorization" ~~means~~ and "natural  
25 organic reduction authorization" mean the crematory or natural organic  
26 reduction form authorizing a cremation or natural organic reduction

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 which is signed by the next of kin or authorizing agent. This crematory  
2 or natural organic reduction form must be a separate document and cannot  
3 be a part of another form or document.

4 (t) The term "natural organic reduction" means the contained, acceler-  
5 ated conversion of human remains to soil.

6 (u) The term "natural organic reduction facility" means a structure,  
7 room, or other space in a building or real property where natural organ-  
8 ic reduction of a human body occurs.

9 § 2. Section 1503 of the not-for-profit corporation law, as separately  
10 amended by chapters 579 and 580 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read  
11 as follows:

12 § 1503. Application.

13 (a) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (b) of this section,  
14 section fifteen hundred five-b, paragraph (c) of section fifteen hundred  
15 seven, ~~and~~ paragraph (m) of section fifteen hundred ten, and section  
16 fifteen hundred eighteen of this article does not apply to (1) a reli-  
17 gious corporation, (2) a municipal corporation, (3) a cemetery corpo-  
18 ration owning a cemetery operated, supervised or controlled by or in  
19 connection with a religious corporation or (4) a cemetery belonging to a  
20 religious or a municipal corporation, or operated, supervised or  
21 controlled by or in connection with a religious corporation unless any  
22 officer, member or employee of any such corporation shall receive or may  
23 be lawfully entitled to receive any pecuniary profit from the operations  
24 thereof, other than reasonable compensation for services in effecting  
25 one or more of the purposes of such corporation or as proper benefici-  
26 aries of its strictly charitable purposes or unless the organization of  
27 any such corporation for any of its avowed purposes be a guise or  
28 pretense for directly or indirectly making any other pecuniary profit  
29 for such corporation, or for any of its officers, members or employees,  
30 and unless any such corporation is not, in good faith, organized or  
31 conducted exclusively for one or more of its stated purposes.

32 (b) All crematories or natural organic reduction facilities shall be  
33 subject to inspection by the division of cemeteries. Upon inspection,  
34 the crematory or natural organic reduction facility may be asked to  
35 produce any and all records for the operation and maintenance of the  
36 crematory or natural organic reduction facility. These records may  
37 include but not be limited to cremation or natural organic reduction  
38 authorizations, rules and regulations of the crematory or natural organ-  
39 ic reduction facility, procedures as set forth in section fifteen  
40 hundred seventeen of this article, and the written procedure of the  
41 identification of remains.

42 § 3. The not-for-profit corporation law is amended by adding a new  
43 section 1505-b to read as follows:

44 § 1505-b. Additional requirements for incorporation of natural organic  
45 reduction facilities.

46 (a) Approval. A cemetery corporation seeking the approval to operate a  
47 natural organic reduction facility shall submit for approval by the  
48 cemetery board the following:

49 (1) a list of the directors, employees, and certificate holders of the  
50 cemetery corporation;

51 (2) a certified survey of the site and location within the county it  
52 will be situated;

53 (3) a business plan for the operation of the natural organic reduction  
54 facility to include, but not be limited to, number of expected natural  
55 organic reductions per year, number of natural organic reduction units,

1 manufacture, capital costs, financing, anticipated number of employees,  
2 types of services provided, pricing thereof;

3 (4) a description of the impact of the proposed natural organic  
4 reduction facility on other natural organic reduction facilities, if  
5 any, within the county;

6 (5) plans, designs, and costs of any structures to be erected or  
7 retrofitted for the natural organic reduction facility use; and

8 (6) a description of any approvals or permits required by state or  
9 local law. No natural organic reduction facility shall be approved until  
10 such other approvals or permits have been obtained.

11 (b) Further information. Within thirty-five days following receipt of  
12 the information required by paragraph (a) of this section, the cemetery  
13 board or the division of cemeteries may request from the cemetery corpo-  
14 ration any additional information or documentation and technical assist-  
15 ance deemed necessary to review such information. Such information shall  
16 not be deemed complete until the requested additional information has  
17 been received. If no such request is made, the submission shall be  
18 deemed complete on the thirty-fifth day after its receipt by the divi-  
19 sion of cemeteries.

20 (c) Determination. The cemetery board shall approve or deny the  
21 proposed natural organic reduction facility within ninety days of the  
22 completed submission.

23 (d) Notification. The cemetery board shall provide written notice of  
24 its determination to the cemetery corporation. If a negative determi-  
25 nation is made, such notice shall state the reasons therefor. Notice  
26 shall be made by registered or certified mail addressed to the cemetery  
27 corporation at its principal office.

28 § 4. Paragraph (c) of section 1508 of the not-for-profit corporation  
29 law, as amended by chapter 579 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read  
30 as follows:

31 (c) Cemetery payment for administration. To defray the expenses of  
32 examination and administration, each cemetery corporation shall not  
33 later than March fifteenth in each calendar year, pay to the cemetery  
34 board the sum of three dollars per interment and cremation or natural  
35 organic reduction in excess of fifteen interments ~~[or]~~, cremations, or  
36 natural organic reductions for the preceding calendar year. No contrib-  
37 ution shall be collected upon the interment of the ~~[remains]~~ remains of  
38 a deceased person where a contribution was collected upon cremation or  
39 natural organic reduction.

40 § 5. Paragraph (c) of section 1510 of the not-for-profit corporation  
41 law, as amended by chapter 579 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read  
42 as follows:

43 (c) Record of burials, natural organic reductions or cremations. A  
44 record shall be kept of every burial in the cemetery of a cemetery  
45 corporation, showing the date of burial, the name, age, and place of  
46 birth of the person buried, when these particulars can be conveniently  
47 obtained, and the lot, plot, or part thereof, in which such burial was  
48 made. A copy of such record, duly certified by the secretary of such  
49 corporation, shall be furnished on demand and payment of such fees  
50 therefor as are allowed the county clerk for certified copies of  
51 records. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, all ceme-  
52 tery corporations which conduct cremations or natural organic reductions  
53 shall maintain permanent records of the name of the deceased human  
54 being, the funeral home from which the remains were received, the  
55 receipt of delivery of the deceased human remains, the authorizing agent  
56 for the cremation or natural organic reduction, and the manner of dispo-

sition of the [~~eremains~~] remains. Such records may be reviewed by the division of cemeteries at any time.

§ 6. The not-for-profit corporation law is amended by adding a new section 1518 to read as follows:

§ 1518. Natural organic reduction facility operations.

Cemetery corporations that operate a natural organic reduction facility shall have the following duties and obligations:

(a) Maintenance and privacy. (1) A natural organic reduction facility shall be maintained in a clean, orderly, and sanitary manner, with adequate ventilation and shall have a temporary storage area available to store the remains of deceased human beings pending disposition by natural organic reduction, the interior of which shall not be accessible to the general public.

(2) Entrances and windows of the facility shall be maintained at all times to secure privacy, including (i) doors shall be tightly closed and rigid; (ii) windows shall be covered; and (iii) entrances shall be locked and secured when not actively attended by authorized facility personnel.

(b) Natural organic reduction process. (1) The natural organic reduction process shall be conducted in privacy. No person except authorized persons shall be admitted into the reduction area, holding facility, or the temporary storage facility while the remains of deceased human beings are being naturally organically reduced. Authorized persons, on admittance, shall comply with all rules of the cemetery corporation and not infringe upon the privacy of the remains of deceased human beings.

(2) The following are authorized persons: (i) licensed, registered funeral directors, registered residents, and enrolled students of mortuary science; (ii) officers and trustees of the cemetery corporation; (iii) authorized employees or their authorized agents of the cemetery corporation; (iv) public officers acting in the discharge of their duties; (v) authorized instructors of funeral directing schools; (vi) licensed physicians or nurses; and (vii) members of the immediate family of the deceased and their authorized agents and designated representatives.

(c) Identification of deceased human beings. (1) No natural organic reduction facility shall naturally organically reduce the remains of any deceased human being without the accompanying natural organic reduction permit, required pursuant to section forty-one hundred forty-five of the public health law which permit shall constitute presumptive evidence of the identity of the said remains. In addition, all natural organic reduction facilities situated outside the city of New York, must comply with paragraph (b) of subdivision two of section forty-one hundred forty-five of the public health law pertaining to the receipt for the deceased human being. From the time of such delivery to the natural organic reduction facility, until the time the natural organic reduction facility distributes the remains as directed, the facility shall be responsible for the remains of the deceased human being. Further, a natural organic reduction authorization form shall accompany the permit required in section forty-one hundred forty-five of the public health law. This form, provided or approved by the facility, shall be signed by the next of kin or authorizing agent attesting to the permission for the natural organic reduction of the deceased, and disclosing to the natural organic reduction facility that such body does not contain a battery, battery pack, power cell, radioactive implant, or radioactive device, if

1 any, and that these materials were removed prior to the natural organic  
2 reduction process.

3 (2) Upon good cause being shown rebutting the presumption of the iden-  
4 tity of such remains, the natural organic reduction shall not commence  
5 until reasonable confirmation of the identity of the deceased human  
6 being is made. This proof may be in the form of, but not limited to, a  
7 signed affidavit from a licensed physician, a member of the family of  
8 the deceased human being, the authorizing agent or a court order from  
9 the state supreme court within the county of the cemetery corporation.  
10 Such proof shall be provided by the authorizing agent.

11 (3) The facility shall have a written plan to assure that the iden-  
12 tification established by the natural organic reduction permit accompa-  
13 nies the remains of the deceased human being through the natural organic  
14 reduction process and until the identity of the deceased is accurately  
15 and legibly inscribed on the container in which the remains are tempo-  
16 rarily placed.

17 (d) Opening of a container holding the remains of the deceased human  
18 being. (1) The remains of a deceased human being shall be delivered to  
19 the natural organic reduction facility in an alternative container or in  
20 external wrappings sufficient to contain the remains and also designed  
21 to fully decompose in the natural reduction process. Such alternative  
22 container or external wrappings holding the remains of the deceased  
23 human being shall not be opened after delivery to the natural organic  
24 reduction facility unless there exists good cause to confirm the identi-  
25 ty of the deceased, or to assure that no material is enclosed which  
26 might cause injury to employees or damage to natural organic reduction  
27 facility property, or upon reasonable demand by members of the immediate  
28 family or the authorized agent.

29 (2) In such instances in which alternative container or wrappings are  
30 opened after delivery to the natural organic reduction facility, such  
31 action shall only be conducted by the licensed funeral director or  
32 registered resident delivering the remains of the deceased human being  
33 and a record shall be made, which shall include the reason for such  
34 action, the signature of the person authorizing the opening thereof, and  
35 the names of the person opening the container or wrappings and the  
36 witness thereto, which shall be retained in the permanent file of the  
37 natural organic reduction facility. The opening of the container or  
38 wrapping shall be conducted in the presence of the witness and shall  
39 comply with all rules and regulations intended to protect the health and  
40 safety of natural organic reduction facility personnel.

41 (e) Ceremonial casket natural organic reduction disclosure. In those  
42 instances in which the remains of deceased human beings are to be deliv-  
43 ered to a natural organic reduction facility in a casket that is not to  
44 be naturally organically reduced with the deceased, timely disclosure  
45 thereof must be made by the person making the funeral arrangements to  
46 the natural organic reduction facility that prior to natural organic  
47 reduction the remains of the deceased human being shall be transferred  
48 to an alternative container. Such signed acknowledgement of the author-  
49 izing person, that the timely disclosure has been made, shall be  
50 retained by the natural organic reduction facility in its permanent  
51 records.

52 (f) Transferring remains. (1) The remains of a deceased human being  
53 shall not be removed from the casket, alternative container, or external  
54 wrappings in which it is delivered to the natural organic reduction  
55 facility unless explicit, signed authorization is provided by the person  
56 making funeral arrangements or by a public officer discharging his or



1 her statutory duty, which signed authorization shall be retained by the  
2 natural organic reduction facility in its permanent records.

3 (2) When the remains of a deceased human being are to be transferred  
4 to an alternative container, the transfer shall be conducted in privacy  
5 with dignity and respect and by the licensed funeral director or regis-  
6 tered resident who delivered those remains. The transferring operation  
7 shall comply with all rules and regulations intended to protect the  
8 health and safety of facility personnel.

9 (g) Commingling human remains. The natural organic reduction of  
10 remains of more than one deceased human being in a reduction container  
11 at any one time is unlawful, except upon the explicit, signed authori-  
12 zation provided by the persons making funeral arrangements and the  
13 signed approval of the natural organic reduction facility, which shall  
14 be retained by the natural organic reduction facility in its permanent  
15 records.

16 (h) Processing of remains. (1) Upon the completion of the natural  
17 organic reduction of the remains of a deceased human being, the interior  
18 of the natural organic reduction container shall be thoroughly swept or  
19 otherwise cleaned so as to render the natural organic reduction contain-  
20 er reasonably free of all matter. The contents thereof shall be placed  
21 into an individual container and not commingled with other remains. The  
22 natural organic reduction permit shall be attached to the individual  
23 container preparatory to final processing.

24 (2) A magnet and sieve, or other appropriate method of separation, may  
25 be used to divide the remains from unrecognizable incidental or foreign  
26 material.

27 (3) The incidental and foreign material of the natural organic  
28 reduction process shall be disposed of in a safe manner in compliance  
29 with all sanitary rules and regulations as byproducts.

30 (4) The remains shall be pulverized until no single fragment is recog-  
31 nizable as skeletal tissue.

32 (5) The pulverized remains shall be transferred to a container or to  
33 multiple containers, if so requested in writing by the person making the  
34 funeral arrangements for the natural organic reduction. Such container  
35 or containers shall have inside dimensions of suitable size to contain  
36 the remains of the person who was naturally organically reduced.

37 (6) The prescribed container or containers shall be accurately and  
38 legibly labeled with the identification of the human being whose remains  
39 are contained therein, in a manner acceptable to the division of ceme-  
40 teries.

41 (i) Disposition of remains. The authorizing agent shall be responsible  
42 for the final disposition of the remains. Disposition of remains result-  
43 ing from the natural organic reduction process are not recoverable once  
44 scattered or interred. Remains shall be disposed of by scattering them  
45 in a designated scattering garden or area in a cemetery, or by prior  
46 authorization by the cemetery corporation, by placing them in a grave,  
47 crypt, or niche, or retrieval of the remains pursuant to prior authori-  
48 zation by the authorizing agent or a person specifically designated by  
49 the authorizing agent. Upon completion of the natural organic reduction  
50 process, the cemetery corporation shall notify the authorizing agent and  
51 funeral firm making such arrangements that the natural organic reduction  
52 process has been completed and that the remains are prepared to be  
53 disposed of in accordance with this paragraph. After disposition, the  
54 cemetery corporation shall be discharged from any legal obligation or  
55 liability concerning the remains. If, after a period of one hundred  
56 twenty days from the date of the natural organic reduction, the author-

1 izing agent has not instructed the cemetery corporation to arrange for  
2 the final disposition of the remains or claimed the remains, the ceme-  
3 tery corporation may dispose of the remains in any manner permitted by  
4 this section. The cemetery corporation, however, shall keep a permanent  
5 record identifying the site of final disposition. The authorizing agent  
6 shall be responsible for reimbursing the cemetery corporation for all  
7 reasonable expenses incurred in disposing of the remains. Upon disposing  
8 of the remains, the cemetery corporation shall be discharged from any  
9 legal obligation or liability concerning the remains. Except with the  
10 express written permission of the authorizing agent, no person shall  
11 place remains of more than one person in the same temporary container or  
12 urn.

13 (j) Natural organic reduction facility operation certification. Any  
14 employee of a natural organic reduction whose function is to conduct the  
15 daily operations of the cremation or natural organic reduction process  
16 shall be certified by an organization approved by the division of ceme-  
17 teries. Proof of such certification shall be posted in the natural  
18 organic reduction facility and available for inspection at any time. Any  
19 new employees of a natural organic reduction facility required to be  
20 certified under this section shall be certified within one year of their  
21 employment. Any employees of a natural organic reduction facility  
22 required to be certified under this section and retained prior to the  
23 effective date of this paragraph shall be certified within one year of  
24 such effective date. Renewal of such certification shall be completed  
25 every five years from the date of certification.

26 § 7. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall  
27 have become a law.