

Home Burial Considerations

Choosing to bury your beloved pet at home can be a meaningful and personal way to honour the bond you shared. If you are considering home burial, it is important to do so thoughtfully and responsibly to help protect your family, other animals, wildlife, and the environment.

Before You Begin

Before choosing home burial, please ensure that it is permitted where you live. Regulations vary between municipalities and regional districts throughout British Columbia, and some areas may prohibit or restrict home burial. If you rent your home, obtain your landlord's permission before proceeding.

Recommended Guidelines

Choose an appropriate location.

Select a quiet location on your own private property where the burial site is unlikely to be disturbed by future landscaping, construction, or excavation.

Protect water sources.

Choose a location well away from wells, streams, rivers, lakes, ponds, wetlands, drainage ditches, and other water sources. Avoid low lying areas that are prone to flooding or have poor drainage.

Prepare an appropriately sized grave.

Dig a grave that is appropriately sized for your pet. As a general guideline, this will typically be **approximately 1.5 metres (5 feet) deep for small to medium sized pets, and 1.8 metres (6 feet) or deeper for larger dogs**, depending on their size. After burial, ensure there is **a minimum of 1.2 metres (4 feet) of compacted soil covering the highest point of the remains**. Adequate burial depth helps discourage scavenging by wildlife, reduces the likelihood of accidental disturbance, and is especially important for pets euthanized with veterinary medications.

Help prevent disturbance by wildlife.

After filling and compacting the grave, consider placing one or more large rocks, landscape stones, or another substantial marker over the burial site. This provides an additional layer of protection against scavenging wildlife while also serving as a lasting memorial.

Protect wildlife.

If your pet was euthanized, the medications used remain within the body after death and may be harmful or fatal to wildlife or other animals if the remains are unearthed or consumed. Ensuring the grave is

securely backfilled, adequately covered, and protected with heavy objects or stones is strongly recommended.

Consider your pet's health history.

If your pet passed away from a contagious or reportable disease, consult your veterinarian before choosing home burial, as cremation or another method of aftercare may be the safer option.

Create a lasting memorial.

Many families find comfort in placing a memorial stone, engraved marker, tree, flowering plant, or other tribute at the burial site. Recording the location for future reference may also be helpful, particularly if the property changes ownership in the future.

A Gentle Reminder

There is no right or wrong way to honour your beloved companion. Whether you choose home burial, private cremation, communal cremation, or another form of memorial, what matters most is the love, compassion, and lifelong care you shared together.

May the memories you created bring comfort, peace, and gratitude in the days ahead.

Please Note

This document is provided as general educational guidance and is not intended as legal, environmental, or veterinary advice. Requirements regarding the burial of companion animals may vary between municipalities, regional districts, strata corporations, and private properties throughout British Columbia. It is your responsibility to ensure that home burial is permitted at your location and that it is carried out safely, respectfully, and in an environmentally responsible manner. If you are uncertain, please contact your local municipality or regional district before proceeding.