



TONYREFAIL & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CEMETERY WEATHER-RELATED CLOSURE POLICY

INDEX

Purpose	2
Scope.....	2
Weather Conditions for Closure	2
High Winds.....	2
Severe Storms.....	2
Snow and Ice	2
Extreme Heat or Cold	2
Procedures for Closure.....	3
Monitoring.....	3
Notification of Closure.....	3
Partial Closures	3
Reopening	3
Communication with Families and Visitors	3
Staff Training and Safety.....	3
Conclusion.....	4

Purpose

This policy is designed to outline the conditions under which the cemetery will be closed to the public due to adverse weather, ensuring the safety of all visitors, staff and property. Special attention is given to weather conditions that may increase risks due to the presence of large trees and other hazards.

Scope

This policy applies to all public access to the cemetery grounds, including visitors, staff and contractors. It covers weather conditions such as high winds, severe storms, heavy snow, extreme cold and other hazardous weather.

Weather Conditions for Closure

High Winds

Threshold for Closure: The cemetery will close if sustained winds exceed 35 mph (56 km/h) or gusts reach 45 mph (72 km/h), particularly if weather reports predict these conditions or if the winds are expected to worsen.

Rationale: High winds can pose a significant risk due to the large trees on the grounds. Falling branches or uprooted trees could lead to injury or damage to property. Staff will monitor wind conditions regularly, and closures may occur if gusts or sustained winds are forecast to be within these ranges.

Severe Storms

Conditions for Closure: The cemetery will close if severe thunderstorms, tornadoes or other severe weather events are forecast, including heavy rainfall or hail that could lead to flooding, damage or injury, or reduced visibility.

Rationale: Severe storms increase risks due to potential lightning strikes, flying debris and water accumulation that may affect walkways and grave sites.

Snow and Ice

Threshold for Closure: The cemetery will close if snow accumulation exceeds 4 inches (10 cm) or if icy conditions cannot be managed and pose a risk to visitor safety.

Rationale: Snow and ice may create dangerous walking conditions on cemetery paths, roads and parking areas. Ice accumulation on trees could also increase the risk of branches falling.

Extreme Heat or Cold

Conditions for Temporary Closure or Restricted Access: If temperatures exceed 95°F (35°C) or drop below 20°F (-6°C), the cemetery may close for a period of time to ensure public safety and the well-being of visitors.

Rationale: Extreme temperatures can present health risks for visitors, especially for those engaging in physical activities such as walking or attending services. Prolonged exposure to extreme cold can also increase the risk of hypothermia.

Procedures for Closure

Monitoring

The cemetery management team will monitor weather forecasts daily and maintain communication with emergency services.

The Clerk will be responsible for making closure decisions based on real-time weather reports and conditions.

Notification of Closure

When a closure is determined, the public will be notified in the following ways:

- Signs at cemetery entrances indicating the closure.
- Website and social media updates for immediate notification.
- Phone message system for those calling for information.
- For events such as funerals or burials, the staff will work with families to reschedule or ensure safety measures are in place, as appropriate.

Partial Closures

In some cases, only certain areas of the cemetery may be closed, such as areas with significant tree cover or areas that may be prone to flooding. Staff will make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Reopening

The cemetery will reopen as soon as it is safe to do so, with roads, walkways, and areas inspected for damage or hazards (e.g., downed trees, debris, or flooding). Reopening will be announced via the same channels used for closure.

Communication with Families and Visitors

Families or visitors with scheduled events or planned visits during weather-related closures will be contacted directly to reschedule or adjust as needed.

Staff Training and Safety

Emergency Response Training: Cemetery staff will be trained annually on emergency weather protocols, including responding to high winds, severe storms, and extreme temperatures.

Safety Equipment: Staff will be equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when responding to hazardous weather conditions, such as sturdy footwear, gloves, and weather-resistant clothing.

Conclusion

The safety of visitors and staff is the Council's top priority. By implementing this policy, we aim to ensure that the cemetery remains a safe and respectful place, even during inclement weather conditions. Regular review and updates to the policy will occur to adapt to changing environmental factors and best practices.