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### Mission

Promote a fair and informed marketplace by protecting consumer rights, enhancing industry professionalism, maintaining rigorous educational standards and enforcing fair business practices.

## From The Chair

Barbara McKinley, Board Chair

2019 has been an exciting and busy year for the AFSRB and our staff. In April we welcomed our newest industry Board member, Dean Ross. Dean has brought a wealth of skills and experience to the Board, not the least of which is his experience with FERC.

The work of the Board over the past several months can be broadly divided into two main categories: governance and modernization.

The Board embarked on an ambitious project this spring to update and develop our policies and bylaws. We completed policies on Board Governance which included Board training, Board evaluation and a Code of Conduct for Board members. The Board has adopted a Pre-Need Compensation Fund policy which covers all aspects of the claim process, including forms, timelines, eligibility and payment amount criteria. We are currently developing a policy for a risk-based inspection program.

With much valuable input from AFSA, the Board has developed a best practice for visual identification and labelling of decedents.

We have made great strides in modernizing our systems and processes by hiring a provider to build a new website and a new computer system for electronic licensing, complaint processing and inspections. This is well under way, and industry professionals should see this new system in place in time for the annual licence renewals in February 2020.

All of this has been made possible by the diligence and hard work of Board Members Scott Barbour, Shawn Feist, Dean Ross, Wendy Lickacz and Debbie Miller, as well as our intrepid Executive Director Karen Carruthers and staff Lori Elanik and Del August.

In the months to come, we will continue our work facilitating excellence in funeral services, promoting high standards within the industry and promoting a fair and informed marketplace. These are the cornerstones of our mission at the AFSRB.

## Board Member Positions

Chair : Barbara McKinley

Vice Chair : Scott Barbour

Treasurer : Debbie Miller

Industry Member : Shawn Feist

Industry member: Dean Ross

Public Member : Wendy Lickacz

## AFSRB Staff

Executive Director : Karen Carruthers

Administration: Lori Elanik & Kelsey Westergaard

Inspector/Investigator : Del August

## Welcome To Our Newest Board Members

Although our newest Board members have been with the AFSRB for a while now, there hasn't been the opportunity to give them an official welcome in the Newsletter. First, we would like to welcome Debbie Miller, the newest public member to be appointed to the AFSRB. Her appointment commenced in October 2018. Debbie currently serves as the Board treasurer. The AFSRB would also like to welcome Dean Ross, the newest industry member elected to the AFSRB. His appointment commenced April 1, 2019. Dean currently serves on the AFSRB Education Committee.



2019-2020 Alberta Funeral Services Regulatory Board Members

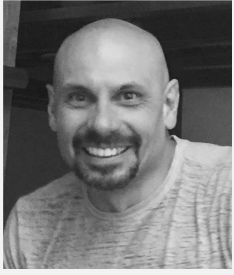
Front row, left to right: Debbie Miller, Wendy Lickacz, Barbara McKinley

Back row, left to right: Dean Ross, Scott Barbour, Shawn Feist

## Electronic Licensing System

The AFSRB has been working with a developer since April of this year, on a new computer system that will automate the licensing process. We are hopeful that the system will be up and running for the upcoming licensing renewal period in March 2020. This new system will be accessed through our website, and will provide online options for submitting applications, renewing licences, submitting continuing education credits, online payment by credit card or the option to create an invoice and submit a cheque, as well as other options still being developed.

When the development is complete, we will be providing training on how to use the system. This may be in the form of a manual, webinars, and/or in person training. Stay tuned for more information coming out this year!



## Inspector's Corner

Hi Everyone,

I hope you are busy planning some fun time for this fall/winter. I wish to update you on the year's inspection process and what it will look like. Some of you may not be aware but the legislation allows the inspection of funeral businesses every three years and although I did my best to see all the businesses in Alberta last year, this will not be the case moving forward. I will be still out doing my inspections but will be selecting different locations throughout the province to visit. I will also be focusing on a couple new items in the inspection process:

- Is the AFSRB logo and website address on your funeral business website?
- I will be looking at the continuing education files and recording how they are organized and stored.
- If your business no longer offers pre-need contract options, are there old pre-need contracts still on file or outstanding ?
- Are your cremation containers leak-proof ?
- Does this funeral services business have a "Restricted Certificate of Authority" for pre-need insurance contracts, and whose name is on that certificate ?

If you are lacking in the above areas or need some clarification on what I require please call or e-mail me and I will be glad to help you. I will be scanning all completed inspections into a folder and will note any deficiencies that need to be addressed. I will then follow up with the business manager to ensure the deficiencies are addressed before forwarding the inspections to Karen Carruthers for processing.

Please know that my phone is always on, you can call me with your questions or concerns and I will do my best to assist you. Well, that is all I have for now, and I look forward to seeing you into the latter part of 2019 and in early 2020.

Inspector - Del August

del@afsrab.ca

Cell: 587-989-3323



### What Do You Think?

"Who controls disposition" is one of the most frequently asked questions at the AFSRB office. Here is a scenario and see if you can determine who has the right to control disposition.

Mrs. Jane Doe has passed away at the age of 94. Mrs. Doe has a will and the executor has been listed as her nephew, Bob.

Bob currently is working overseas and is unable to complete the funeral arrangements for his Aunt Jane. Bob has requested that the funeral services business contact his sister, Mrs. Doe's niece, to make all the decisions regarding the arrangements. The funeral director is aware that Mrs. Doe has a daughter in the area who would be able to make these arrangements. Mrs. Doe has no other next of kin.

Should the funeral director follow the direction of the executor and make the arrangement with Mrs. Doe's niece or should Mrs. Doe's daughter be contacted to make the arrangements?

See page 6 for the answer.



# Visual Identification and Labelling Best Practices

The AFSRB has approved the following best practices for Visual Identification and Labelling. This guideline has the intent to prevent misidentification of the decedent prior to disposition and to ensure that proper disposition is carried out according to the family's wishes. The Visual Identification and Labelling Best Practices are not mandatory for any funeral services business in the province of Alberta however these are recommended by the AFSRB. Accurate documentation of each individual funeral services business policy/process must be developed, in place and a copy provided to the AFSRB office by January 15, 2020.

## Visual Identification

Before a disposition may take place, the owner, the licensed business manager or a licensed funeral director has the option to ensure that the authorized decision maker (as per the order of priority as outlined in Section 36 of the Funeral Services Act General Regulation) or a person designated by the authorized decision maker (who is capable of making the identification), has visually identified the human remains.

*Documentation is required that confirms the family or designated person has viewed the deceased and signed a document with regards to that action, OR has opted not to view the deceased and have signed a document with regards to no action. Photograph identification would be considered acceptable and may be performed and documented by the funeral director.*

The recommendation for visual identification does not provide the authorization for embalming if the authorized decision maker does not expressly agree to this.

Each funeral services business will create and follow a standardized policy regarding visual identification that takes into consideration the unique circumstances of that business and the needs of the families that they serve. The AFSRB will require that all funeral services businesses provide a copy of their policy to the AFSRB office by January 15, 2020. If a funeral services business already has a policy in place, the existing policy can be provided to the AFSRB office.

## Labelling

It is recommended that every Business Manager, owner or licensed funeral director within a funeral services business

- Ensures that human remains are labelled at all times while in the custody of the funeral home and while being brought into the care of the funeral home, regardless whether the remains are being transported by a third-party transport service; and
- Ensures that every person transporting human remains is satisfied as to the identity of the remains at the time of initially receiving the deceased and bringing them into the care of the intended destination; and
- Creates and follows a documented standardized process to ensure that

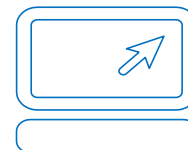
the human remains and cremated remains are continuously identified, from the time of the original transfer until the body reached final disposition. This process to be provided to the AFSRB office by January 15, 2020.

The method of labelling should be such that the label cannot accidentally become separated from the human remains it is to identify.

The Business Manager is responsible for ensuring that every person transporting human remains to the funeral services business complies with the requirements set out in their policy.

Templates and additional information can be found on the AFSRB website under the "Industry" tab.

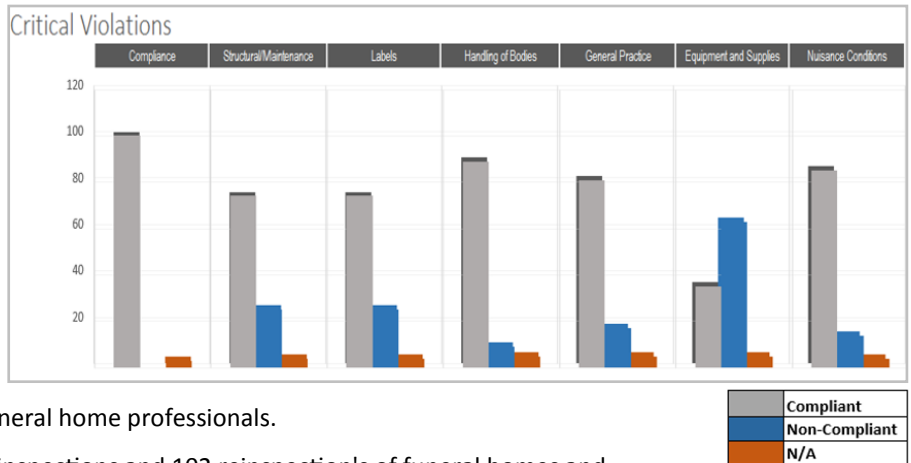
Visit the AFSRB  
website at  
[www.afsrb.ab.ca](http://www.afsrb.ab.ca)





## Collaboration With AHS - Funeral Home Inspection Outcomes

Hi Everyone, I am the Director of Calgary Zone Environmental Public Health (Alberta Health Services) and the Provincial Lead for Bodies of Deceased Persons. I wanted to provide a summary of our experiences collaborating with your industry during the education sessions and inspections that have taken place over the past couple of years.



Several years back, AHS work in Ebola preparation highlighted some potential gaps in compliance with the Bodies of Deceased Persons Regulation under the Public Health Act. AHS collaborated with the AFSRB and the AFSA in order to determine an approach to the industry. We provided in person training focused on protecting workers and the public and limiting the spread of illness for attendees from across Alberta. Once all workers across the province attended a course, we transitioned to a fully online course for new funeral home professionals.

Public Health Inspectors conducted 126 initial inspections and 102 reinspection's of funeral homes and crematoriums across Alberta. Feedback from inspectors was that they found your industry to be full of educated, dedicated, and highly professional staff. Inspectors received a lot of questions about issues slightly outside our scope of inspection, and we hope that we were able to help out with some information/resources. Overall, inspection results were excellent, with some periodic issues identified, such as selection and use of disinfectants, sink accessibility, and personal protective equipment.

By the last reinspection, every facility was provided with an inspection report that indicated 100% compliance.

I wanted to express what a positive experience it was for health inspectors dealing with funeral home professionals in Alberta. I know the big question has been, "Are they coming back?" and the simple answer is "not right now". We will continue to collaborate with industry, AFSRB and the AFSA in the following ways:



- Work with AFSRB and the AFSA to create joint resources for the industry.
- Conduct architectural plan checking and initial inspections of new funeral homes and crematoriums.
- Create basic health and safety checklist for regulatory board inspectors.
- Respond to complaint/referrals.
- Improve online training for funeral home workers.
- Engage with educational institutions to train future workers early.

Overall, I really want to thank all of you for being so welcoming to Environmental Public Health. We have thoroughly enjoyed working with you to confirm the high standard of funeral home services in Alberta!

## Student Eligibility Form

As of April 1, 2019, all students in an approved funeral director and/or embalmer education program are required to be registered with the AFSRB. In order for a student to obtain experience in licensed activity and earning hours towards their licence, the AFSRB must have the student registered. This is a one-time registration, as long as the student continues to work for the same funeral services business (corporate entity) and their employment is continuous. The fee for a student registration is \$25 and does not need to be renewed annually. This registration will remain active until the student graduates and obtains their licence.

It is important for the AFSRB to be able to track the students and confirm that only licensees and students are performing licensed activities as described in the legislation.

If you have a student that is not registered, please complete the form that is available on the AFSRB website. It is important to get them registered as soon as possible, so they are eligible to be participating in licensed activities. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

## Happy Holidays



## Answer To “What Do You Think”?

Section 36(4) of the Funeral Services Act General Regulation, states: “If the person who, under this section, has the right to control the disposition of human remains or cremated remains is not available or is unwilling to give instructions, that right passes to the next available qualified person”.

In this scenario, Bob would be the first person in the order of priority for controlling the disposition of Mrs. Doe. Because Bob is not available to make these arrangements, the regulation does not give Bob the authority to delegate someone else to make the arrangements. The funeral director would need to contact Mrs. Doe’s daughter to make the arrangements as she would be the next available qualified person on the order of priority.

## New AFSRB Website

The AFSRB has launched a new website which continues to be located at : [www.afsrb.ab.ca](http://www.afsrb.ab.ca)  
During the migration to the new website, some of you may have noticed that not all of the links have been working. We are continuing to add information to the website every week but it will take some time to complete this process. If there is any information that you are unable to access on the website, please contact the office and we will provide the information to you. We appreciate your patience during this transition.

“If there ever comes a day  
where we can’t be together,  
keep me in your heart. I’ll stay  
there forever”.

From Winnie the Pooh

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