

§2900-A. Natural organic reduction

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Natural organic reduction" has the same meaning as in section 2841-A, subsection 1. [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

B. "Natural organic reduction facility" has the same meaning as in section 2841-A, subsection 2. [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

2. Natural organic reduction permitted. A cemetery corporation operating within the State, after obtaining a license from the department and meeting the requirements of this section, may establish and maintain suitable buildings and appliances for subjecting the body of a deceased person to natural organic reduction and, in accordance with this section and the rules of the department, may subject the body to natural organic reduction and dispose of the remains of the body.
[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

3. Application for licensure. A cemetery corporation operating within the State seeking to establish a natural organic reduction facility shall submit the following information to the department in application for licensure:

A. A list of the directors, employees and certificate holders of the cemetery corporation; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

B. A certified survey of the site and location within the State the natural organic reduction facility will be situated; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

C. A business plan for the operation of the natural organic reduction facility, including but not limited to the number of bodies expected to be subjected to natural organic reduction each year, the number of sites within the natural organic reduction facility for subjecting bodies to natural organic reduction and the manufacturing costs, capital costs, financing, anticipated number of employees and types of services provided and pricing of those services; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

D. A description of any anticipated effect the natural organic reduction facility will have within the State; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

E. Plans, designs and costs of any structures to be built or retrofitted for the natural organic reduction facility; and [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

F. A description of any approvals or permits required to build or retrofit the natural organic reduction facility required under state laws and local ordinances and documentation showing that the approvals or permits have been obtained. [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

Within 35 days of receiving an application pursuant to this subsection, the department may request any other information the department considers necessary.

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

4. Timeline for processing application; notification of results. The department shall approve or deny an application for licensure submitted under subsection 3 within 90 days of receiving a complete application. The department shall provide, by registered or certified mail addressed to the cemetery corporation at its principal office, written notice of its determination to the cemetery corporation and, if the application is denied, the reasons for denying the application.
[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

5. Authority. A natural organic reduction facility licensed under this section may:

A. Subject the body of a deceased person to natural organic reduction; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

B. Meet with members of the public to arrange and provide for natural organic reduction; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

C. Enter into contracts for the provision of disposition by natural organic reduction, except that the natural organic reduction facility may not enter into pre-need agreements under Title 13, section 1264; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

D. Arrange, direct or perform the removal or transportation of the body of a deceased person; and [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

E. Secure and file all necessary certificates, permits, forms or other documents. [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

6. Certification required. An employee of a natural organic reduction facility who is responsible for the daily operations of natural organic reduction must be certified by the department within one year of the employee's beginning employment. Renewal of the employee's certification must occur every 5 years.

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

7. Facility requirements. A natural organic reduction facility shall:

A. Maintain the facility in a clean, orderly and sanitary manner; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

B. Have adequate ventilation; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

C. Have a temporary storage area to store the remains of human bodies that is not accessible to the general public; and [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

D. Structure the facility in a manner that protects privacy, including by having tightly closed and rigid doors, covered windows and locked and secured entrances. [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

8. Certificate from medical examiner or medicolegal death investigator. The body of a deceased person may not be subjected to natural organic reduction within 48 hours after death unless the person died of a contagious or infectious disease, and in no event may the body of a deceased person be subjected to natural organic reduction until the natural organic reduction facility in charge of the disposition has received a certificate from a duly appointed medical examiner or medicolegal death investigator appointed pursuant to Title 22, section 3023-A that the medical examiner or medicolegal death investigator has made personal inquiry into the cause and manner of death and is satisfied that further examination or judicial inquiry concerning the cause and manner of death is not necessary. This certificate, a certified copy of the death certificate and a burial transit permit, if necessary, when presented by the authorized person as defined in Title 22, section 2846 is sufficient authority for the body to be subjected to natural organic reduction, and the natural organic reduction facility in charge of the disposition may not refuse to subject the body to natural organic reduction solely because these documents are presented by such an authorized person. The certificate must be retained for a period of 15 years by the natural organic reduction facility in charge of subjecting the body to natural organic reduction. For the certificate, the medical examiner must receive a fee of \$25 payable by the person requesting the certificate. This fee may be waived at the discretion of the Chief Medical Examiner.

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

9. Privacy of human remains. A natural organic reduction facility shall adopt policies to ensure that the privacy of human remains is respected. The facility shall restrict access to the storage area where human remains are stored or being subjected to natural organic reduction, except to an authorized person. For the purposes of this subsection, "authorized person" means:

- A. A licensed funeral director; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
 - B. A student of the practice of funeral services; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
 - C. Officers or trustees of the cemetery corporation operating the natural organic reduction facility; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
 - D. Designated employees or agents of the natural organic reduction facility; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
 - E. State or municipal employees acting within the scope of their duties; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
 - F. Designated instructors of the practice of funeral services; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
 - G. Licensed physicians or nurses; and [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
 - H. Members of the immediate family of the deceased person or their agents. [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]
- [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

10. Statement regarding condition of body. The next of kin of the deceased person or other authorized person shall attest that the body of the deceased person does not contain a battery, battery pack, power cell, radioactive implant or radioactive device.
[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

11. Container requirements. Upon delivery to the natural organic reduction facility, the body of a deceased person must be in a container or wrapped in a manner sufficient to contain the body and fully decompose through natural organic reduction. If the container or wrappings are not able to be naturally organically reduced, the natural organic reduction facility shall timely notify the person making the funeral arrangements that the body of the deceased person will be transferred to an alternative container and the person making the funeral arrangements shall sign an acknowledgement that this timely notification was made. This record must be maintained by the natural organic reduction facility. The body of the deceased person may then be transferred to an alternative container by a licensed funeral director.
[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

12. Opening container prohibited; exceptions. The container or wrappings required in subsection 11 may not be opened or removed unless by a licensed funeral director in the presence of a witness if good cause exists to confirm the identity of the deceased person, to ensure that devices identified in subsection 10 are not present or upon reasonable demand by the person's next of kin or agent. If the container or wrappings are opened or removed, the natural organic reduction facility must document in its records the reason, the name of the person who authorized the opening of the container or removal of the wrappings, the name of the person who opened the container or removed the wrappings and the name of the witness.
[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

13. Multiple deceased persons. A natural organic reduction facility may not subject more than one deceased person's body to natural organic reduction in the same container at one time unless the facility receives explicit, signed authorization by the person making funeral arrangements. This record must be maintained by the natural organic reduction facility.
[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

14. Treatment of remains after natural organic reduction. Following the natural organic reduction of the body of a deceased person, a natural organic reduction facility:

- A. Shall thoroughly clean the interior of the container used for natural organic reduction; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

B. Shall place the remains of the body in an individual container that is sufficient to hold the remains and does not contain other remains unless authorized pursuant to subsection 13; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

C. Shall label the container of the remains of the body with the name of the deceased person whose body was subjected to natural organic reduction; [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

D. May use a magnet and sieve or other appropriate method to separate the human remains from any foreign material. The foreign material must be disposed of in accordance with department rules; and [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

E. Shall pulverize the remains of the body until no single fragment is recognizable as skeletal tissue. [PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

15. Inspection. Upon inspection of a natural organic reduction facility, the department may require the facility to produce records of the facility's operation and maintenance, including authorizations for the disposition of bodies of deceased persons.

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

16. Rulemaking. The department shall adopt rules to implement this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

[PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2023, c. 676, §19 (NEW).

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