

Maine LD1223: An act to allow crematories using chemical dissolution processes in facilities other than cemeteries.

1) this is not about us; it is about people who want and deserve another option. There has not been much innovation in this sector. On the disposition permit there are 2 options: Burial or cremation. However alkaline hydrolysis is relatively new and is a green option.

2) The 20-acre mandate is a function of zoning. Crematories couldn't be in industrial and usually away from residential. Alkaline hydrolysis (aka aquamation) doesn't need 20 acres because we are not burying bodies in the ground. We only need to be connected to town wastewater system. Typically, towns approve these applications because the effluent is the equivalent of an organic fertilizer because of all the amino acids, peptides, sugars etc.

3) The chemicals we add are naturally occurring. Sodium and potassium are 2 of the top 8 elements in the earth's crust and we add them in the form of sodium and potassium hydroxide. The process is basically the same that occurs when a body is buried except it takes 20 hours not 20 years. When the process is done, the water is sterile and free from any pathogens.

4) Environmental benefits include: no burning of fossil fuels so no harmful greenhouse gases emission, when compared to flame cremation, it has 1/10 the carbon footprint and uses 90% less energy, the water is recycled, and it saves land. It can also reclaim precious metal (titanium) in people who had hip or knee replacement.

5) This week the Health and Human Services committee will meet to determine if they will allow open air/outdoor cremation where some will be for, some against and some in between. There was an online article about this and a man named Michael said it would not bother him at all; "it's a person's right." I think he means it's a person's right to choose. Allow alkaline hydrolysis so people have another choice.