



ICCM Webinar

The ICCM will be holding a weekly webinar to help those involved in frontline bereavement services during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Webinars, which will be facilitated by PlotBox, will allow those watching to post questions, which will be answered live. ICCM Officers, Officers from allied organisations, front-line bereavement services officers and other guests will feature in the weekly webinar, and relevant topics will be discussed. Anyone involved in providing burial and cremation services is invited to join in – details of the next webinar being held on Thursday 16 April at 15.00 can be found here:

<https://info.plotbox.io/uk-contingency-planning-webinar-registration-16-04-2020>

Planning for Pandemic Burial

Many authorities may be considering looking for land for excess burials should the situation demand. It is vital that Environment Agency advice is taken into account when considering such sites:

Arrangements for human burials in emergencies

During an emergency situation, such as a health epidemic or disaster, it's a priority to keep sources of drinking water safe from contamination.

Emergency planners should always try to use alternatives to burial for body disposal, such as cremation. Plans for using existing cemeteries, or land reserved for new cemeteries, must not affect the quality or safety of groundwater or any other water supplies.

Any temporary morgue or mortuary must be able to contain bodily fluids, microbes, substances and chemicals. This may involve sealing drains for safe collection of liquids for later removal by a specialist contractor.

During such emergency situations, if groundwater is at risk, then the minimum groundwater protection requirement of being outside an SPZ1 may be extended to SPZ2.

Please note - this means that restrictions for appropriate safe site selection during a pandemic are greater than in usual circumstances.

It is our collective responsibility to protect valuable drinking water stocks, so please pay heed to the Environment Agency advice to ensure that sources remain safe.

If you have not already conducted a risk assessment for your burial sites you are urged to do so as now. Guidance on this legal requirement can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cemeteries-and-burials-groundwater-risk-assessments>.

Electronic Forms for Cremation

Members are advised that where they are accepting forms for cremation via electronic means, there is no requirement for these to be followed up by paper forms. The electronic forms must be kept for

15 years from the date of the cremation. Requesting paper copies of the forms results in more work, and an increased number of journeys in order to deliver them.

Deceased Management Advisory Group (DMAG)

DMAG continues to meet by video conferencing every day to discuss the latest issues around the coronavirus pandemic. Members of various Government departments regularly join the meetings to advise and consult with the DMAG members. Notes of the DMAG meetings can be found on the [DMAG website](#), which also contains useful advice and resources.

ICCM Support

Officers are now working from home, but are continuing to provide advice and guidance via updates on the website at www.iccm-uk.com, and via phone and email. Contact details for the officers can be found [here](#).

Please continue to follow Government guidance and stay safe.