

NFDA

NATIONAL
FUNERAL
DIRECTORS
ASSOCIATION

2021 NFDA Cremation & Burial Report

Published July 2021

Statistics, projections and analysis of consumer preference for cremation and burial in the United States, Canada and worldwide.

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NFDA 2021 Cremation & Burial Report Highlights

As the pandemic has progressed, the National Center for Health Statistics has expedited data reporting on COVID-19-related deaths, but method-of-disposition data is not yet available for 2020 and 2021, so it is too soon to tell how the increased number of deaths will affect cremation and burial rates for 2020 and 2021.



**Mortuary workers named
“CRITICAL
INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKERS”**

83%

**OF FUNERAL
DIRECTORS HAVE
RECEIVED AT LEAST
ONE DOSE OF
THE COVID-19
VACCINE AS OF
MARCH 2021**

39.3%

As of May 24,
2021, 39.3%
of the U.S.
population has
been fully
vaccinated

49.4%

As of May 24,
2021, 49.4%
have received
at least one
dose of the
vaccine

The COVID-19 pandemic is estimated to **INCREASE THE NUMBER OF U.S. DEATHS ABOVE THE NORMAL AVERAGE** by 494,000 in 2020 and 445,000 in 2021

SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT IN THE PANDEMIC AND FUNERAL SERVICE:

- ① the rising number of people being vaccinated
- ② fewer social-distancing restrictions
- ③ more people opting for full services
- ④ the total number of cases is declining
- ⑤ COVID-19 death rates are falling
- ⑥ hospital admissions are down



8 OUT OF 10

COVID-19-
related
deaths involve

**ADULTS 65 YEARS OLD
AND OLDER**

Due primarily to
COVID-19 deaths,
**LIFE EXPECTANCY
IN THE U.S. HAS
DECLINED BY
1 YEAR** (It's now
75.1 years for men,
80.5 years for women)

**1
YEAR
LESS**

60.9%

Percentage of NFDA-
member firms experiencing
**INCREASED
CREMATION RATES**
due to the coronavirus
pandemic

28%

of Americans
report **STRONGER PERSONAL
FAITH** because of the
COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly,
in 2020 and 2021, there was
an increase in the number of
Americans feeling **RELIGION
IS A VERY IMPORTANT
COMPONENT IN A FUNERAL**

Overall industry revenue is
expected to slowly grow at
an annualized rate of
**0.3% TO \$15.9
BILLION BY 2025**



**OVER
50%**

NFDA projects the cremation
rate in all 50 U.S. states and
D.C. **WILL EXCEED
50% BY 2035**

BY 2040, THE U.S. CREMATION

RATE is projected to reach **78.4%** and
the burial rate **16.0%**

IN CANADA, THE 2040 CREMATION

RATE is projected to reach **87.9%** and
the burial rate **10.9%**

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The COVID-19 Pandemic and Funeral Service*

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. Shortly after, the U.S. declared a national emergency, which caused states to issue stay-at-home orders, mask mandates, and capacity limits on businesses.

Since then, COVID-19 became the third leading cause of death in the U.S. for the year 2020. As of May 25, 2021, there were 587,342 coronavirus-related deaths in the U.S., and the death toll is expected to continue climbing, but at a much slower rate than in 2020 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2021).

The elderly and people with certain pre-existing conditions are more likely to die if they contract COVID-19. In general, eight out of 10 coronavirus-related deaths reported in the U.S. involve adults 65 years old and older (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, April 2021).

Because of the risk of exposure to COVID-19 that funeral directors face daily, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency classified mortuary workers as "critical infrastructure workers" on March 19, 2020. Thus, funeral directors were given priority to receive the coronavirus vaccines in most states. As of March 2021, it was estimated that 83% of funeral directors have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine (NFDA, March 2021).

The U.S. and many other parts of the world are now seeing signs of improvement concerning the pandemic. In December 2020, distribution of COVID-19 vaccines started in the U.S. and, as of May 24, 2021, 39.3% of the U.S. population has been fully vaccinated, and 49.4% have received at least one dose of the vaccine (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2021).

In the U.S., the number of people being vaccinated continues to rise, death rates are falling, the total number of cases is declining, and hospital admissions are down. COVID-19 variants are emerging, however, that could present new challenges in confronting the pandemic and might reverse some of the progress being made.

Funeral service has been impacted in many ways by the increased death rate resulting from COVID-19. In coronavirus hotspots – usually comprising large, metropolitan areas – funeral homes, crematories and morgues have experienced a temporary spike in demand. As of August 2020, 86.7% of NFDA-member funeral homes have served at least one family who lost a loved one as a result of COVID-19 (NFDA, August 2020).

Despite the increase in the number of U.S. deaths, and thus the greater number of services provided by funeral homes on average, there are many aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic that will have a negative impact on industry revenue in 2020 and 2021. These primarily arise from "safer at home" orders, social-distancing guidelines to stay six feet apart from people, and prohibitions on mass gatherings.

Like many businesses, funeral homes had to change the way they operate during the pandemic. In addition to requiring staff and families to wear masks and follow social-distancing guidelines, some funeral providers offered virtual arrangement conferences; service webcasting; funerals with only the immediate family present; memorial-service planning for gatherings to be held after restrictions are lifted; and drive-thru funerals, to name but a few.

Nearly two-thirds of NFDA-member funeral homes (60.9%) stated that the cremation rate at their firm increased since the COVID-19 crisis began. Since cremations generally generate less revenue than burials, the already increasing cremation rate will likely grow at an even higher rate in the next few years. It is still too early to know how the coronavirus pandemic will affect burial and cremation rates going forward, however.

Social-distancing measures also negatively impacted funeral home revenue this past year because people could not gather in large groups. While 17.8% of NFDA-member firms stated the COVID-19 crisis increased their profits, 53.8% of firms stated the coronavirus decreased profits due to pandemic-related restrictions (NFDA, August 2020).

Almost half (49.1%) of NFDA-member funeral homes started offering live-streaming options since the onset of COVID-19 because many states did not allow people to gather in large groups. If no services were held due to COVID-19 restrictions, 39.4% of families affected expressed an interest in having a service at a later date. Only 20.4% of those expressing an interest, however, actually followed through and held a service or made definite plans for a service for their loved one (NFDA, May 2021), further straining funeral home revenue.

**Please note that all references to COVID-19 deaths and related cremation and burial statistics in this report are preliminary since there is a delay in reporting deaths. The lag primarily results from the time it takes to complete a death certificate; states reporting deaths at different rates; the extra time it takes to code COVID-19 deaths; and reporting systems that use different definitions or methods of counting deaths (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2020).*

Influence of Rising U.S. Cremation Rates on Funeral Service

Between 2019-21, the number of licensed crematories in the United States increased 2.3% to 3,374. Approximately 36% of funeral homes in the country now operate their own crematories; another 9% plan to open their own within the next five years.

This means that funeral homes that do not own a crematory compete with stand-alone crematories in the 45 states that allow funeral homes to own crematories – particularly regarding the growing consumer preference for direct-cremation (cremation without formal viewing, visitation or ceremony with the body present).

The primary reason consumers select direct-cremation is its perceived cost-effectiveness. Despite this, a growing number of families follow the direct-cremation of a loved one with some type of memorialization event involving family and friends – but frequently *without* the services of a funeral director.

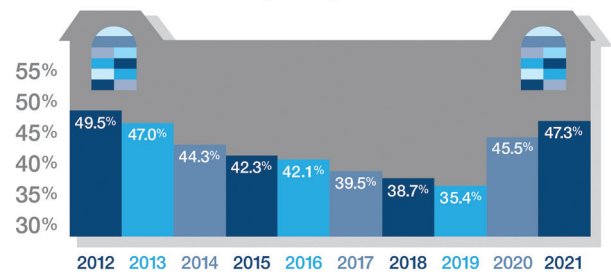
Many factors contribute to the steadily rising popularity of cremation among U.S. consumers, including cost considerations; environmental concerns; an increasingly transient population; fewer religious prohibitions against the practice; and changing consumer preferences, such as the desire for simpler, less-ritualized funeral ceremonies.

In addition, cremation has become socially acceptable as a growing number of Americans think and talk about death in new ways. Cremation's popularity is only expected to increase.

A surge in the number of Americans who no longer identify with any religion has contributed to the decline of the traditional funeral in the U.S. and the rise of cremation as the disposition method of choice. Those who are non-religious are most likely to consider cremation for family and friends (FAMIC, 2015). From 2007-14, the percentage of religiously unaffiliated adults increased from 16% to almost 26% of the U.S. population (Pew, 2019).

Since 2012, the percentage of U.S. consumers age 40 and older who feel it is very important to have religion as part of a funeral decreased from 49.5% in 2012 to 35.4% in 2019. However, more Americans say the COVID-19 pandemic strengthened their religious faith and, now, nearly three-in-10 Americans (28%) report stronger personal faith because of the pandemic (Pew, 2021). Similarly, the percentage of Americans who feel religion is a very important component in the funeral of a loved one increased in 2020 and 2021.

Percentage Who Feel a Religious Component in a Funeral of a Loved One Is Very Important



As cremation numbers increase, the forecast for gains in funeral home revenue remains moderate because cremation services generally produce lower revenue. Typically, cremations cost 40% less than funerals with burials.

Statistics show that the average cost of a cremation has increased during the past decade, however (NFDA 2019). Today, many of the same product and service options are available regardless of whether one chooses cremation or casketed burial, which decreases the cost difference between these forms of final disposition when comparing like products and services. (See "NFDA 2019 General Price List Burial- and Cremation-Related Charges," page 11.)

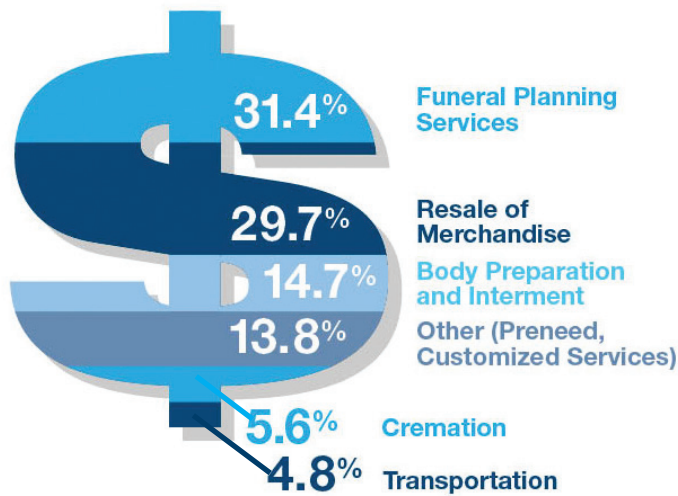
To meet the business challenges created by the ongoing rise in cremation rates and the continued decrease in preferences for a traditional funeral, funeral homes, crematories (if allowed by state law) and cemeteries will likely offer more products and services associated with cremation, along with cremation packages and custom urns.

In addition, it is predicted that funeral homes will continue expanding their array of extra services offered to families; increasing their focus on niche markets to differentiate themselves; and drawing attention to their value-added services, such as webcasting funerals and serving groups with diverse cultural and religious preferences (IBISWorld, Inc., 81221, October 2020).

Funeral planning services (31.4%) and resale of merchandise (29.7%) provide the greatest sources of revenue to funeral homes. As burial rates decrease, however, the demand for caskets, burial vaults and monuments will decline. (Caskets account for nearly two-thirds of merchandise sold.)

Fewer burials also decrease the need for services involving body preparation, such as embalming and visitation. The revenue received from the resale of merchandise and body preparation services has decreased during the past five years (IBISWorld, Inc., 81221, October 2020).

Industry Revenue



Although annual cremation services now outnumber burials in the U.S., cremation only accounts for 5.6% of industry revenue. The increasing cremation rate has been the most significant challenge to the funeral service industry because cremation is generally performed at a much lower cost than casketed burial.

Cremation revenue is also limited because most funeral homes do not own a crematory and must contract the services of a third party.

Due to additional labor needed to meet the growing death rate and the aging population, funeral homes will not be able to cut back on employment, limiting their ability to significantly alter their cost structure, which will also limit profits.

Considering all of these factors, overall industry revenue is expected to slowly grow at an annualized rate of 0.3% to \$15.9 billion by 2025 (IBISWorld, Inc., 81221, October 2020).

Key External Influences on Funeral Service

Based on analysis of the key external influences on the funeral service industry, business conditions are projected to grow at a slow pace for the industry during the five-year period 2021-25, with overall industry revenue anticipated to expand at an average annual rate of 0.3% for funeral homes.

Key external influences on funeral service include the number of U.S. deaths; U.S. per capita disposable income; the number of adults age 65 and older; the number of cremations; and e-commerce sales. All of these, with the exception of U.S. per capita disposable income, are projected to increase from 2020-25 and in subsequent years (IBISWorld, Inc., 81221, October 2020; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).



Number of U.S. Deaths

The annual number of U.S. deaths is related to the age structure of the American population. The average U.S. life expectancy dropped by a year in the first half of 2020 (National Center for Health Statistics). Life expectancy at birth for the total U.S. population was 77.8 years – a decline of one year (from 78.8) in 2019. For males, the life expectancy at birth was 75.1 – a decline of 1.2 years from 2019. For females, life expectancy declined to 80.5 years – a 0.9 decrease from 2019.

Deaths due to COVID-19 are the main factor in the overall drop in U.S. life expectancy between January and June 2020 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). A surge in drug overdose deaths is also a contributing reason for the life expectancy decline.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, older adults are projected to outnumber children by the year 2035 for the first time in American history: 78.0 million people age 65 years and older versus 76.7 million under the age of 18.

At the time of this report's preparation (May 25, 2021), U.S. deaths in 2021 related to COVID-19 had reached an estimated 587,342.

In the absence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the total number of deaths in the U.S. was projected to grow steadily from 2019 through 2021, averaging approximately 25,000 additional deaths each year. However, the COVID-19 pandemic is estimated to increase the number of U.S. deaths above the normal average by 494,000 in 2020, and 445,000 in 2021.

Year	Annual Deaths Per 1,000 Population	
1995	8.8	Final Data
2000	8.7	
2005	8.3	
2010	8.0	
2015	8.2	
2020	8.3	Projected Data*
2025	8.6	
2030	9.0	
2040	10.0	
2050	10.3	
2060	9.9	

Sources: (Crude Death Rates – total deaths/total population) CDC/NCHS; National Vital Statistics System. *U.S. Census Bureau 2015-2060

Method-of-disposition data is not yet available for 2020 and 2021, so it is too soon to tell how the increased number of deaths will affect cremation and burial rates for 2020 and 2021. However, 60.9% of NFDA-member funeral homes stated that the cremation rate at their firm increased since the COVID-19 crisis began.

As the pandemic has progressed, the National Center for Health Statistics expedited data collection and release on both “regular” and COVID-19-related deaths. At the time of this report’s preparation (May 25, 2021), solid estimates were available for total deaths by U.S. state for 2020. Furthermore, enough data has been compiled in early 2021 to permit reasonable short-range forecasts of the likely total deaths attributable to the pandemic for the current calendar year.

The table on page 5 does *not* account for any increase in death rates that might occur due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



U.S. Per Capita Disposable Income

The increase or decrease in per capita disposable income directly relates to the performance of the funeral service industry. Per capita disposable income in the United States is predicted to decrease in 2020 (once results are finalized). This means that consumer price concerns about funeral costs might increase (IBISWorld, Inc., 81222, October 2020).

The increasing unemployment rate due to the COVID-19 virus will directly affect U.S. per capita disposable income. In April 2020, the unemployment rate in the U.S. increased to 14.7% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Consumer consumption slumped as businesses closed and households held off on major purchases due to worries about finances and jobs (Foreign Policy Research Institute, March 2020).

A year later, given the availability of vaccines, the decreasing number of COVID-19 cases/deaths, and the lifting of pandemic-related restrictions, however, the unemployment rate in the U.S. improved to 6.1% in April 2021 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). As businesses keep opening up, more people are employed, and restrictions lifted, people are starting to hold large gatherings, including opting for full funeral services, again.



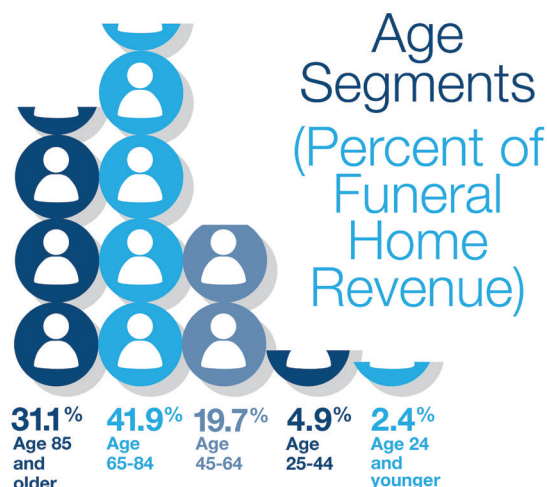
Adults Age 65 and Older

The number of adults age 65 and older increased from 13% of the U.S. population at the time of the 2010 Census to 14.9% in 2015 (U.S. Census Bureau). By 2030, when every baby boomer (those born 1946-64) has joined the ranks of the older population, it is projected that 21% of the U.S. population will be 65 or older (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, May 2015).

Long-term outlooks show that America’s 65-and-older population is projected to nearly double during the next three decades – ballooning from 48 million to 88 million by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, CB16-54, March 2016). This will have a positive impact on funeral service industry revenue because individuals between the ages of 65 and 84 account for 41.9% of revenue, while individuals age 85 and older account for 31.1%.

Currently individuals age 65-84 are less likely than other age groups to be cremated and are therefore more likely to opt for casketed burials. This age group is also more likely to have made some financial provisions to pay for their own funerals and more likely to have contracted preneed services (IBISWorld, Inc., 81222, October 2020).

Of the COVID-19-related deaths in the U.S., it is estimated that approximately 80% are people age 65 and older (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2021). The increase in deaths of people age 65 and older will most likely mean an increase in families to serve in 2021.



The Growing Cremation Rate

The U.S. cremation rate is expected to increase from 54.5% in 2019 to 78.4% in 2040. The rising number of cremations can be attributed to changing consumer preferences, weakening religious prohibitions, cost considerations, and environmental concerns.

The majority of NFDA-member funeral homes (60.9%) stated that the cremation rate at their firm increased since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Since cremations generally generate less revenue than burials, the already increasing cremation rate might start to increase at an even higher rate in the next few years. It is too soon to tell if COVID-19-related deaths will have an impact on cremation and burial rates in the upcoming years.



E-commerce Sales

U.S. e-commerce sales are projected to increase in 2020 (once data are finalized). While funeral homes have traditionally benefited from limited competition versus e-commerce sales, major online retailers now offer caskets, urns and memorial items – all of which allows consumers to compare prices. This suggests an increasingly urgent need for funeral providers to adapt.

The U.S. Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce estimated U.S. retail e-commerce sales for the first quarter of 2021 at \$215.0 billion, an increase of 7.7% (±0.5%) from the fourth quarter of 2020. For comparison purposes, e-commerce sales were \$160.3 billion in the first quarter of 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and “safer at home” orders, activities such as online grocery sales caused e-commerce sales to increase. It is too soon to tell if online sales of funeral items will increase due to the pandemic, however.

U.S. Cremation and Burial Trends

In 2015, the national cremation rate surpassed the casketed-burial rate for the first time in U.S. history.

Overall, the annual rise in the percentage of cremations, and the corresponding decline in the percentage of burials, has followed a relatively steady pattern nationally, averaging about 1.5% per year in most U.S. states.

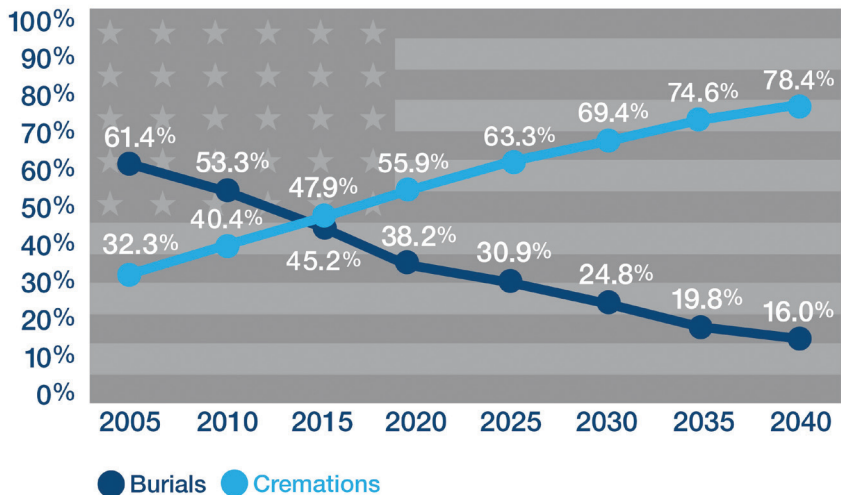
The annual number of cremations in the United States is expected to rise from 1.56 million in 2019 to 2.3 million by 2030, and to 2.99 million by 2040. (For comparison, the number of cremations in 2010 was 1 million.)

By 2040, the cremation rate is projected to grow to 78.4% of all U.S. deaths.

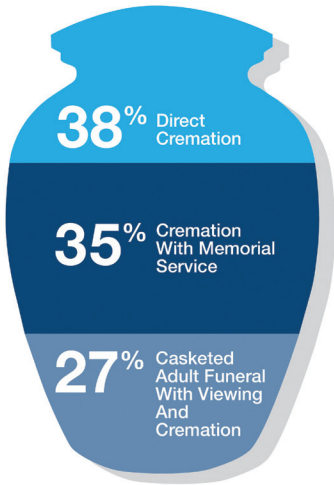
In 2019, 32 U.S. states had cremation rates above 50%. By 2021, 42 states and the District of Columbia are projected to reach cremation rates exceeding 50% and, by 2035, all 50 states and the District of Columbia are predicted to reach cremation rates exceeding 50%.

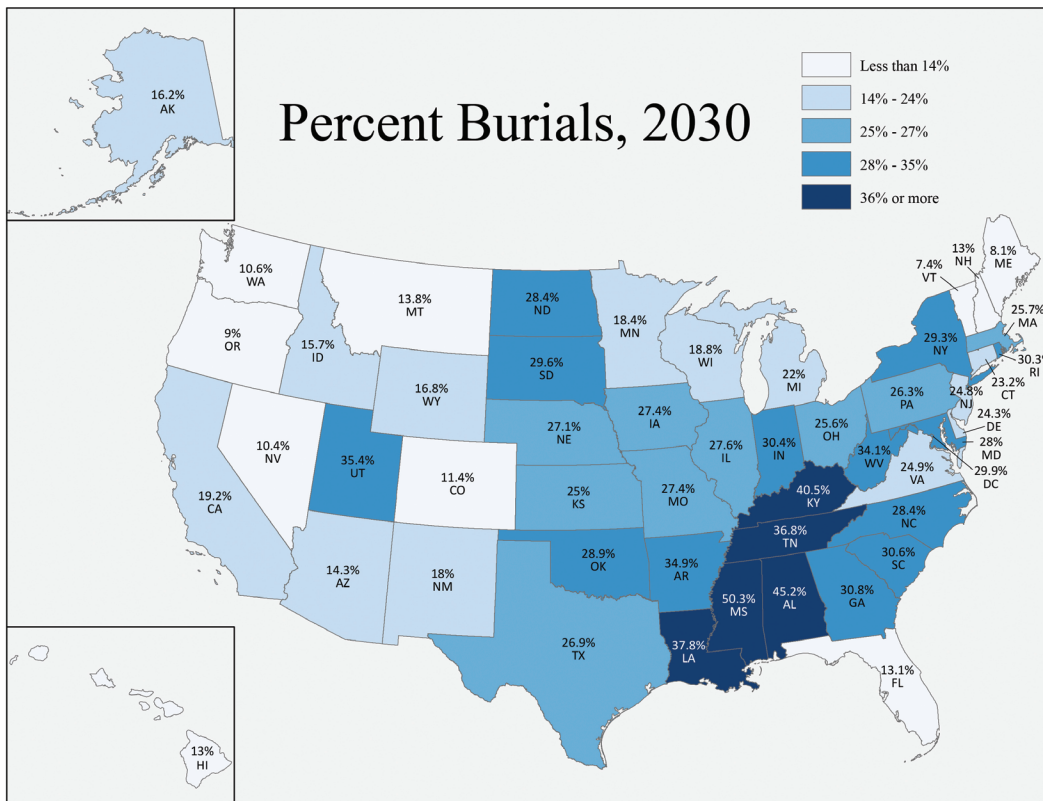
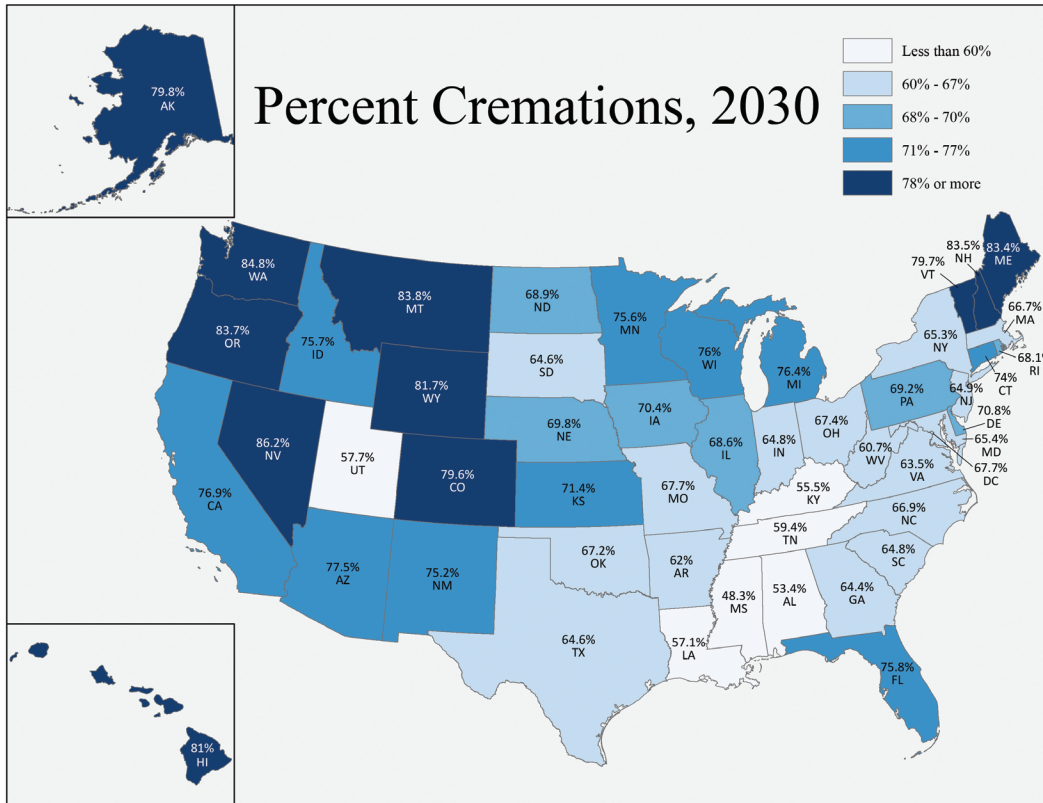
Despite the projected increase in U.S. annual deaths from 2.87 million in 2019 to 3.8 million in 2040 – a roughly 33% increase – the increasing consumer preference for cremation will result in the number of burials declining from 1.1 million in 2019 to 819,950 in 2030, and then to 609,350 in 2040. (For comparison, the number of burials in 2010 was 1.3 million.)

U.S. Projected Cremation and Burial Rates



Cremations Performed in 2020





Projected Deaths by Method of Disposition, by State, 2021 - 2040 (with Base Year 2019), Percent of Total

State	Burials							Cremations						
	2010^	2015^	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040	2010^	2015^	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040
Alabama	81.6%	73.4%	62.1%	54.6%	45.2%	37.0%	29.6%	17.2%	25.7%	36.4%	44.1%	53.4%	61.5%	68.5%
Alaska	31.6%	29.5%	23.6%	19.1%	16.2%	13.4%	10.6%	61.1%	66.4%	71.2%	75.3%	79.8%	82.5%	85.3%
Arizona	30.4%	23.1%	19.7%	17.4%	14.3%	11.5%	9.0%	62.5%	66.9%	70.3%	74.3%	77.5%	80.2%	82.7%
Arkansas	68.4%	61.3%	50.1%	42.9%	34.9%	27.8%	22.1%	27.7%	36.4%	46.7%	54.0%	62.0%	69.0%	74.7%
California	36.1%	31.2%	29.3%	24.8%	19.2%	16.3%	13.5%	58.5%	63.4%	66.8%	71.8%	76.9%	81.1%	83.8%
Colorado	28.5%	21.4%	16.8%	14.3%	11.4%	9.0%	7.5%	63.3%	70.3%	74.2%	76.8%	79.6%	82.1%	83.5%
Connecticut	53.8%	44.3%	34.8%	29.0%	23.2%	18.6%	15.7%	43.4%	53.2%	62.5%	68.3%	74.0%	78.7%	81.8%
Delaware*	54.8%	45.8%	36.4%	30.4%	24.3%	19.2%	16.1%	40.7%	48.2%	58.5%	64.2%	70.8%	75.8%	79.2%
District of Columbia	60.3%	55.5%	44.2%	37.4%	29.9%	24.2%	19.2%	34.7%	43.1%	54.2%	61.0%	67.7%	73.4%	78.5%
Florida	30.1%	22.6%	18.8%	16.2%	13.1%	10.5%	8.6%	58.1%	63.6%	70.1%	72.7%	75.8%	78.4%	80.3%
Georgia	63.6%	55.5%	45.1%	38.3%	30.8%	24.6%	19.1%	30.2%	39.4%	50.1%	57.0%	64.4%	70.7%	76.1%
Hawaii	24.1%	21.4%	18.3%	15.7%	13.0%	10.3%	8.5%	69.0%	72.2%	75.8%	78.3%	81.0%	83.8%	85.5%
Idaho	35.0%	30.2%	23.5%	18.9%	15.7%	12.9%	10.2%	51.5%	60.4%	68.0%	72.5%	75.7%	78.6%	81.3%
Illinois	60.6%	51.5%	41.0%	34.7%	27.6%	21.9%	17.8%	35.2%	44.9%	55.5%	61.8%	68.6%	74.3%	78.7%
Indiana	64.1%	55.1%	44.6%	37.8%	30.4%	24.3%	19.2%	29.8%	39.4%	50.6%	57.3%	64.8%	70.9%	76.0%
Iowa	60.9%	50.4%	40.9%	34.6%	27.4%	21.8%	17.8%	31.4%	46.0%	57.8%	63.8%	70.4%	75.5%	80.6%
Kansas	58.3%	48.1%	37.0%	31.1%	25.0%	19.4%	16.3%	36.7%	47.5%	59.4%	65.1%	71.4%	76.5%	80.1%
Kentucky*	77.5%	68.7%	57.1%	49.3%	40.5%	32.7%	26.3%	19.3%	27.3%	38.9%	46.7%	55.5%	63.2%	69.8%
Louisiana	76.4%	65.1%	53.9%	46.4%	37.8%	30.4%	24.2%	21.2%	29.7%	40.9%	48.5%	57.1%	64.5%	70.7%
Maine	26.0%	17.1%	11.6%	9.6%	8.1%	6.6%	5.2%	64.7%	72.4%	79.9%	81.9%	83.4%	84.9%	86.3%
Maryland	59.0%	51.1%	41.5%	35.2%	28.0%	22.2%	17.6%	35.2%	42.1%	51.4%	58.2%	65.4%	71.2%	75.8%
Massachusetts	55.3%	47.8%	38.3%	32.2%	25.7%	20.0%	16.4%	37.7%	45.2%	53.1%	59.9%	66.7%	72.4%	76.1%
Michigan	50.7%	42.5%	33.1%	27.5%	22.0%	17.8%	15.0%	47.3%	56.1%	65.4%	70.9%	76.4%	80.8%	83.4%
Minnesota	48.4%	38.5%	27.4%	22.9%	18.4%	15.6%	12.7%	49.5%	58.9%	65.3%	70.5%	75.6%	80.7%	83.2%
Mississippi	84.6%	77.3%	67.2%	59.8%	50.3%	41.5%	33.9%	13.8%	20.9%	31.4%	38.8%	48.3%	57.1%	64.7%
Missouri	62.6%	52.4%	40.9%	34.4%	27.4%	21.7%	17.6%	32.6%	42.5%	54.3%	60.8%	67.7%	73.4%	77.7%
Montana	30.5%	25.9%	18.9%	16.6%	13.8%	11.0%	9.0%	65.7%	71.4%	78.5%	81.1%	83.8%	86.6%	88.6%
Nebraska	60.9%	51.1%	40.0%	33.9%	27.1%	21.5%	17.4%	36.1%	45.8%	57.2%	63.2%	69.8%	75.3%	79.8%
Nevada	16.1%	20.0%	15.4%	13.2%	10.4%	8.7%	7.2%	70.0%	75.6%	81.7%	83.7%	86.2%	88.6%	90.1%
New Hampshire	33.8%	24.5%	18.2%	15.8%	13.0%	10.3%	8.5%	61.6%	71.2%	78.4%	80.8%	83.5%	86.3%	88.0%
New Jersey	53.0%	47.0%	37.7%	31.4%	24.8%	19.1%	16.0%	35.1%	42.6%	52.1%	58.4%	64.9%	70.6%	73.8%
New Mexico	38.7%	33.7%	27.2%	22.6%	18.0%	14.9%	12.2%	53.6%	58.3%	66.0%	70.6%	75.2%	78.3%	81.0%
New York	58.6%	51.8%	43.4%	36.7%	29.3%	23.5%	18.4%	33.9%	41.9%	51.1%	57.8%	65.3%	71.1%	76.1%
North Carolina	64.5%	53.5%	42.1%	35.6%	28.4%	22.8%	18.1%	32.8%	42.1%	53.2%	60.0%	66.9%	72.9%	77.5%
North Dakota*	68.1%	55.2%	42.1%	35.6%	28.4%	22.7%	18.2%	29.2%	41.9%	55.8%	62.3%	68.9%	74.2%	79.3%
Ohio	58.0%	48.6%	38.3%	32.0%	25.6%	20.0%	16.4%	35.5%	44.4%	54.7%	61.0%	67.4%	73.0%	76.6%
Oklahoma	65.5%	53.8%	42.9%	36.4%	28.9%	23.2%	18.7%	30.8%	41.4%	53.8%	60.5%	67.2%	73.2%	78.1%
Oregon	22.2%	18.4%	13.2%	11.0%	9.0%	7.5%	6.1%	69.4%	74.3%	79.5%	81.7%	83.7%	85.2%	86.7%
Pennsylvania	57.0%	49.4%	38.9%	32.7%	26.3%	20.7%	17.0%	36.1%	44.7%	56.5%	62.8%	69.2%	74.8%	78.5%
Rhode Island	62.3%	53.8%	44.3%	37.6%	30.3%	24.3%	19.1%	36.4%	44.8%	54.1%	60.9%	68.1%	74.1%	79.3%
South Carolina	64.3%	55.7%	44.8%	38.1%	30.6%	24.5%	19.0%	30.2%	39.5%	50.6%	57.4%	64.8%	70.9%	76.4%
South Dakota	64.2%	56.1%	43.8%	37.1%	29.6%	23.7%	18.7%	28.8%	38.1%	50.3%	57.1%	64.6%	70.4%	75.5%
Tennessee	73.9%	64.9%	52.8%	45.3%	36.8%	29.4%	23.7%	22.5%	31.3%	43.3%	50.9%	59.4%	66.7%	72.4%
Texas	59.3%	50.5%	40.2%	33.7%	26.9%	21.2%	17.1%	32.0%	40.3%	51.3%	57.8%	64.6%	70.3%	74.4%
Utah	64.5%	62.0%	50.7%	43.4%	35.4%	28.2%	22.6%	26.1%	34.7%	41.4%	49.0%	57.7%	65.0%	71.3%
Vermont*	27.8%	15.1%	10.4%	8.8%	7.4%	5.9%	4.6%	59.9%	68.4%	76.6%	78.2%	79.7%	81.1%	82.5%
Virginia**	66.6%	47.5%	37.1%	31.1%	24.9%	19.1%	15.9%	26.5%	40.9%	49.0%	56.0%	63.5%	69.3%	72.5%
Washington	24.3%	20.1%	15.7%	13.4%	10.6%	8.6%	7.2%	70.9%	76.4%	80.3%	82.3%	84.8%	87.3%	89.3%
West Virginia	67.0%	62.1%	49.1%	42.1%	34.1%	27.3%	21.7%	21.8%	33.2%	44.8%	52.2%	60.7%	67.3%	73.3%
Wisconsin	47.6%	38.8%	28.5%	23.9%	18.8%	15.7%	13.0%	44.9%	55.1%	66.0%	71.0%	76.0%	79.1%	81.8%
Wyoming	32.8%	28.6%	24.8%	20.2%	16.8%	14.0%	11.2%	56.6%	67.9%	74.1%	78.1%	81.7%	84.2%	86.6%
UNITED STATES	53.3%	45.2%	36.6%	30.9%	24.8%	19.8%	16.0%	40.4%	47.9%	57.5%	63.3%	69.4%	74.6%	78.4%

*Deaths by MOD for 2019 are estimated

**States with six or fewer years' data in base period 2005-2019, indicating greater uncertainty in the projections.

^Final data

U.S. Crematory Ownership

Approximately 36% of funeral homes own crematories in the 45 states (and the District of Columbia) that legally allow them to do so. Of the funeral homes in those 45 states (and the District of Columbia) still using a third-party cremation provider, 9% plan to open their own crematories within the next five years.

Between 2019-21, there has been an 2.3% increase in the number of licensed crematories in the United States. The highest concentrations of crematories (and cemeteries) in the United States are in the Southeast, Great Lakes, and MidAtlantic regions (IBISWorld, Inc., OD4415, December 2020).

Cremation rates tend to be higher in large cities because they tend to have greater transient populations; burial plots tend to be more expensive; there is a high demand for land; and the supply of burial plots is dwindling. Population density, the percentage of adults age 65 and older, and regional preferences for cremation instead of burial also influence the location of crematories.

2021 Number of Crematories By State							
State	Number of Crematories	State	Number of Crematories	State	Number of Crematories	State	Number of Crematories
Alabama	71	Illinois	137	Montana	38	Rhode Island	14
Alaska	12	Indiana	119	Nebraska	29	South Carolina	82
Arizona	57	Iowa	68	Nevada	26	South Dakota	13
Arkansas	41	Kansas	43	New Hampshire	20	Tennessee	82
California	227	Kentucky	44	New Jersey	25	Texas	182
Colorado	80	Louisiana	36	New Mexico	30	Utah	17
Connecticut	21	Maine	14	New York	50	Vermont	12
Delaware	12	Maryland	40	North Carolina	149	Virginia	116
D.C.	35	Massachusetts	19	North Dakota	11	Washington	60
Florida	193	Michigan	78	Ohio	153	West Virginia	32
Georgia	136	Minnesota	76	Oklahoma	55	Wisconsin	113
Hawaii	17	Mississippi	34	Oregon	67	Wyoming	18
Idaho	37	Missouri	90	Pennsylvania	243		

**Crematories are not licensed in Massachusetts; number of crematories is estimated. Note: Funeral homes cannot own crematories in Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey or New York. In Alabama and Utah, only funeral homes can operate a crematory; in Georgia and Oklahoma, a licensed funeral director must be in charge of a crematory; in Florida, crematories must be supervised by a licensed funeral director or licensed direct disposer.*

What Happens to Cremated Remains?

Approximately 42% of cremated remains are returned to families; 35.2% are buried at a cemetery; 16.0% are scattered at non-cemetery locations; and 8.1% are placed in a columbarium.

Pet Cremation Services

Only 15% of U.S. funeral homes offer pet cremation services; another 15% plan to offer these services within the next few years. Most funeral homes (70%) have no plans to offer pet cremation in the future.

Trends in Deathcare Preferences Among U.S. Consumers

2021 Annual NFDA Consumer Study Findings

An estimated 9.7% of U.S. households experienced the death of someone close during the pandemic, but no funeral or memorial service occurred.

When planning their own funerals, 26.0% of consumers age 40 and older would prefer a casketed burial; 8.5% would prefer a “green” burial; and 16.0% are not sure or undecided about choosing burial for their final disposition.

Of the 41.6% of consumers who would prefer cremation, 31.5% said they would personally wish to have a complete funeral service with a viewing and visitation prior to cremation.

Overall, 72.4% of consumers age 40 and older feel it is important to have the body or the cremated remains present at a funeral or memorial service.

When planning a funeral, most consumers only call

one funeral home. In descending order, the main reasons consumers select a funeral home are the funeral home’s location; the funeral home offered an affordable price; previously used the funeral home for a service; and, finally, the funeral home’s reputation.

Overall, 63.9% of respondents felt it is very important or somewhat important for a funeral home to have an onsite crematory.

The majority of consumers (52.5%) would prefer using a full-service funeral home for a cremation; 18.4% would prefer a discount provider; and 27.1% had no preference.

Consumers seek more non-traditional funeral service options. Almost half (42.0%) have attended a funeral at which non-clergy presided over the service. Thirty-five percent of consumers would consider using a celebrant.

In addition, 55.7% would be interested in exploring “green” funeral options; 32.3% are either very interested or interested in donating their body for medical research; and more than half (51.5%) have attended a funeral at a nontraditional location, such as an outdoor setting, cemetery, personal residence and/or a public venue.

NFDA 2019 General Price List Burial- and Cremation-Related Charges

Selected GPL Funeral Goods and Services	2019 Median Charges
Adult casketed funeral with viewing and ceremony followed by burial (vault not included)*	\$7,640
Immediate burial (container provided by family)	\$2,725
Immediate burial (container provided by funeral home)	\$3,315
Adult casketed funeral with viewing and ceremony followed by cremation*	\$6,645
Direct cremation (container provided by family)	\$2,395
Direct cremation (container provided by funeral home)	\$2,495
Metal burial casket	\$2,500
Cremation casket	\$1,200
Alternative cremation container	\$150
Urn	\$295

Source: © 2019 NFDA GPL Study. The next NFDA GPL Study will be conducted in 2021. Median = amount at which half of the figures fall below and half are above.

*Definition: Adult Casketed Funeral With Burial

Funeral with a viewing and ceremony at the funeral home includes the following most-typical elements (excludes vault, cemetery, monument/marker, and miscellaneous cash-advance charges):

- Non-declinable Basic Services Fee
- Removal/Transfer of Remains to Funeral Home
- Embalming/Other Preparation of the Body
- Use of Facilities/Staff for Viewing
- Use of Facilities/Staff for Ceremony at Funeral Home
- Hearse
- Service Car or Van/Utility Vehicle
- Basic Memorial Printed Package
- Metal Casket (average charge for most frequently purchased item)

*Definition: Adult Casketed Funeral With Cremation

Funeral with a viewing and ceremony at the funeral home includes the following most typical elements (excludes vault, cemetery, monument/marker, and miscellaneous cash-advance charges):

- Non-declinable Basic Services Fee
- Removal/Transfer of Remains to Funeral Home
- Embalming/Other Preparation of the Body
- Use of Facilities/Staff for Viewing
- Use of Facilities/Staff for Ceremony at Funeral Home
- Service Car or Van/Utility Vehicle to Transport to Crematory
- Basic Memorial Printed Package
- Ceremonial/Rental or Cremation Casket
- Cremation Fee
- Urn

Canada Cremation and Burial Rates

In the absence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the total number of deaths in Canada was projected to grow on average by approximately 11,700 additional deaths each year from 2019 through 2021.

At the time of this report's preparation (May 25, 2021), no national statistical agency had compiled solid data or estimates of deaths related to the pandemic. Therefore, the provincial-level estimates and forecasts of the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) were used to develop an estimate of COVID-19-related deaths for 2020 and 2021.

Using IHME's estimates and forecasts, it is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic increased Canada's total deaths in 2020 by approximately 25,000, and will increase total deaths by roughly 21,500 in 2021. Furthermore, lacking data on the method of disposition, it is assumed that these additional deaths will follow the pattern within each province as predicted for "non-COVID-19" deaths. Based on these assumptions, the 2021 cremation rate in Canada is estimated at 75.5%, and the rate is projected to grow to 87.9% of deaths by 2040.

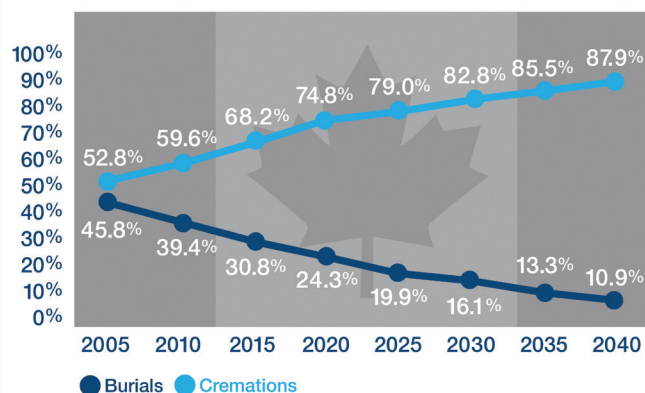
The number of cremations in Canada is expected to rise from 245,120 in 2020 to 310,940 by 2030, and then to

396,790 by 2040. (For comparison, the number in 2010 was 142,942.)

By 2025, cremation rates will likely exceed the 74% mark in every Canadian province except for Newfoundland and Labrador, where the projected cremation rates will be 57.6% and 55.5%, respectively.

Even with the projected increase in Canadian deaths – from 285,682 in 2019 to 451,350 deaths in 2040 (a 58.0% increase) – increasing consumer preference for cremation will result in the number of burials declining from 75,728 in 2019 to 60,300 in 2030, and then to 49,280 in 2040. (For comparison, the number of burials in Canada in 2010 was 94,473.)

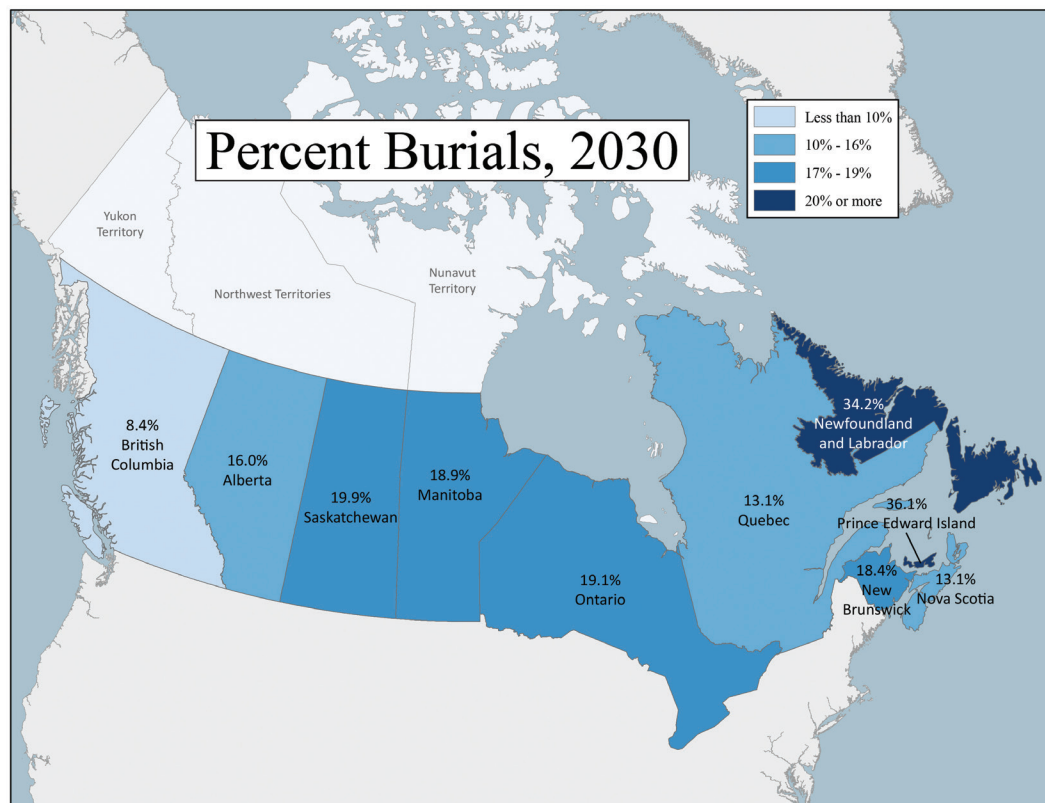
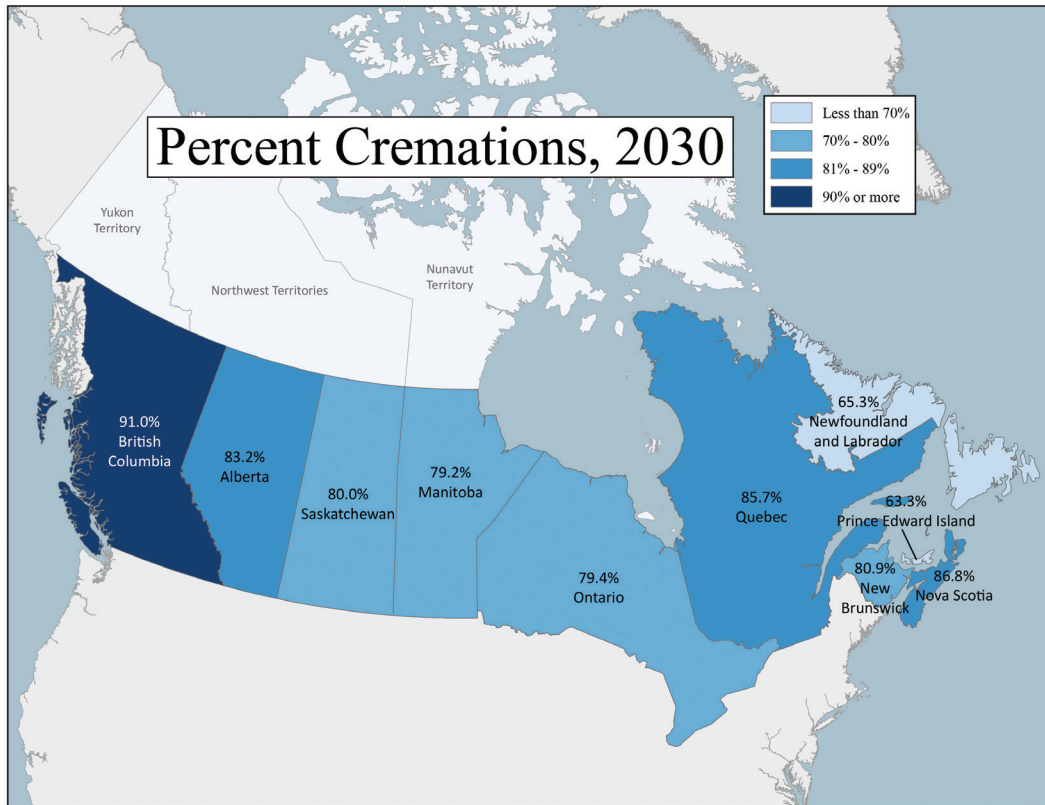
Canada Projected Cremation and Burial Rates



Projected Deaths by Method of Disposition, by Province, 2021 - 2040 (with Base Year 2019), Percent of Total

Province	Burials							Cremations						
	2010^	2015^	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040	2010^	2015^	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040
Alberta	33.4%	28.3%	22.3%	18.8%	16.0%	13.2%	10.4%	65.5%	70.8%	76.9%	80.4%	83.2%	85.9%	88.7%
British Columbia	17.8%	15.1%	12.4%	10.1%	8.4%	7.0%	5.6%	81.4%	84.3%	87.0%	89.3%	91.0%	92.4%	93.8%
Manitoba	39.4%	34.7%	27.9%	23.4%	18.9%	16.0%	13.2%	59.6%	63.3%	70.1%	74.4%	79.2%	82.2%	84.7%
New Brunswick	53.4%	40.1%	27.4%	23.0%	18.4%	15.6%	12.8%	46.1%	59.4%	71.8%	76.2%	80.9%	83.6%	86.4%
Newfoundland and Labrador	78.5%	62.0%	49.0%	42.0%	34.2%	27.4%	21.9%	21.2%	37.8%	50.6%	57.6%	65.3%	72.1%	77.7%
Nova Scotia	37.6%	26.0%	18.1%	15.9%	13.1%	10.2%	8.5%	62.4%	73.9%	81.8%	84.0%	86.8%	89.7%	91.4%
Ontario	41.6%	36.2%	28.6%	24.2%	19.1%	16.2%	13.4%	57.1%	62.3%	70.0%	74.3%	79.4%	82.2%	85.0%
Prince Edward Island	77.8%	64.0%	51.4%	43.9%	36.1%	29.0%	23.3%	22.0%	35.6%	47.9%	55.5%	63.3%	70.0%	75.8%
Québec**	43.6%	27.3%	18.1%	15.9%	13.1%	10.3%	8.5%	55.2%	72.0%	81.0%	83.0%	85.7%	88.4%	90.3%
Saskatchewan	45.4%	37.9%	29.9%	25.5%	19.9%	16.9%	14.2%	54.6%	62.1%	70.0%	74.5%	80.0%	83.0%	85.8%
TOTAL (Provinces)	39.4%	30.8%	23.5%	19.9%	16.1%	13.3%	10.9%	59.6%	68.2%	75.5%	79.0%	82.8%	85.5%	87.9%

^Final data



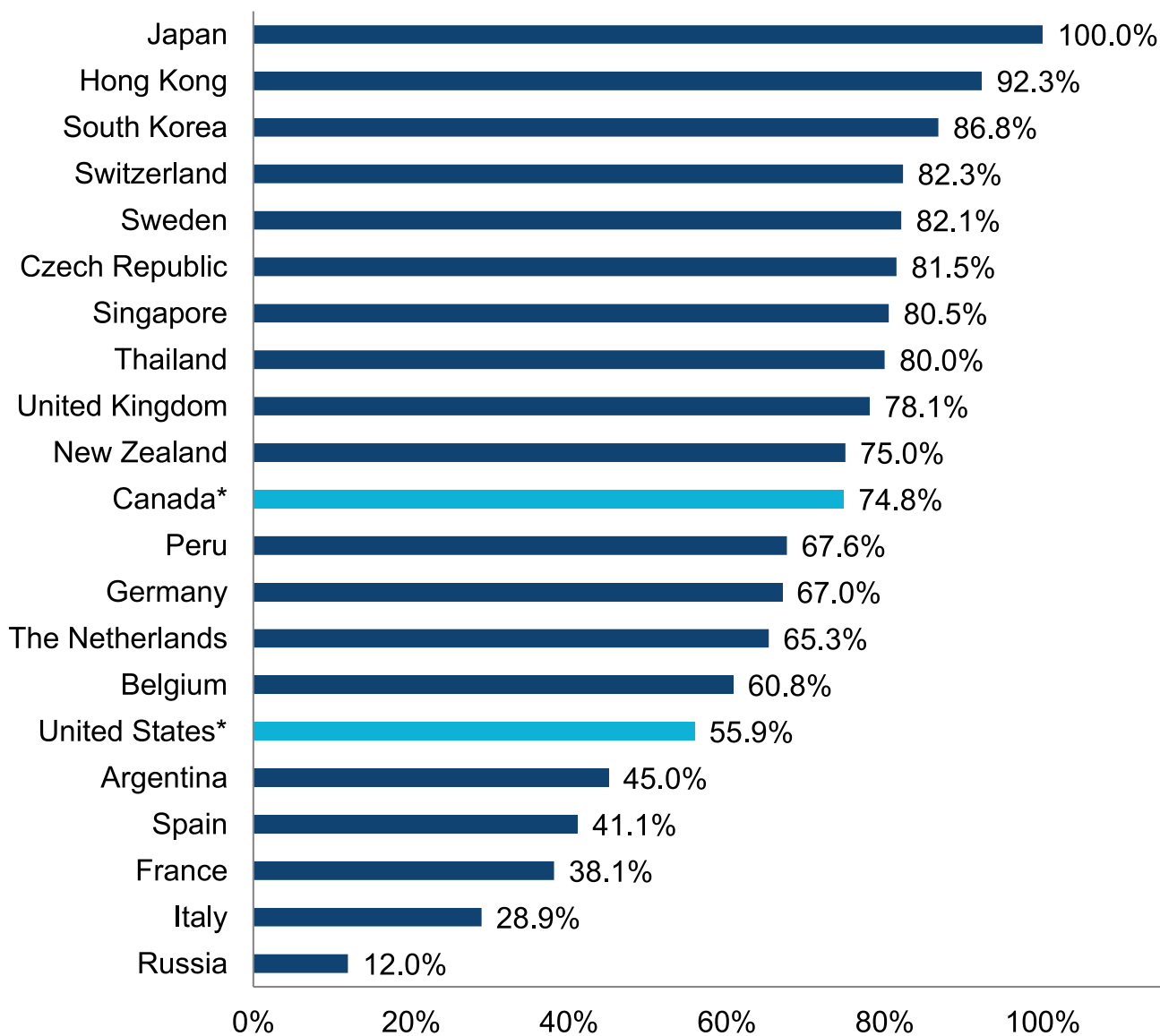
Global Cremation Rates

Cremation is the prevailing practice where the custom is ancient and most of the population adheres to Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and/or Jainism. Cremation is discouraged, if not prohibited, however, in Abrahamic religious traditions.

Nations with the highest cremation rates (80% or higher) include Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Switzerland, Sweden, Czech Republic, Singapore, and Thailand. In Japan, the practice is universal (Cremation Society of Great Britain, International Cremation Statistics 2019).

The Cremation Society of Great Britain noted that in concentrated urban areas around the globe, the cremation rate is often more than 70%, reflective of population density and decreasing burial space. The latest available global cremation data follow.

Global Cremation Statistics
(Selected countries, 2019 or latest year available)



Sources: The Cremation Society of Great Britain, 2019 Report; *U.S. and Canadian numbers provided by NFDA (2020).

Methodology & Copyright

The University of Wisconsin – Madison Applied Population Laboratory Department of Community and Environmental Sociology prepared the statistical projections for the “2021 NFDA Cremation & Burial Report.”

U.S. state-level deaths by “method of disposition” data were collected from state vital-statistics departments or similar state regulatory agencies for the years 2002-19.

A spline model was used as the projection method for calculating the percentages of burials and cremations. The small percentage (approximately 6%) of “other” methods of disposition (such as body donation, entombment, removal from state, etc.) are not included in this report.

Once base percentages were completed, the annualized rates of change for each U.S. state’s share of burials and cremations were calculated and carried forward to the desired projection dates of 2020, 2021, 2025, 2030, 2035 and 2040. An upper bound for cremations and a lower bound for burials were established for 2025-40.

To establish projected state deaths and, hence, the future number of burials and cremations, age/sex-specific death rates were calculated using the U.S. Census Bureau’s national projections, and data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as Statistics Canada.

As with any statistical projection, there might be variations, such as increases or decreases in deaths from year to year in an individual state or province, or even at the national level.

For the complete methodology used in this study, contact NFDA at 800-228-6332.

United States: The COVID-19 pandemic created a discontinuity in the 2020 and 2021 death projections. At the time of this report’s preparation (May 25, 2021), solid estimates of total deaths by state for 2020 were available from the CDC; these values were substituted for those normally generated by the statistical model used. For 2021, enough death data has been compiled in early 2021 to permit reasonable short-range forecasts of the likely total deaths attributable to the pandemic for the entire year.

The forecasted deaths rely on the work of the University of Washington’s Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, a leading source of COVID-19 case and mortality statistics.

In sum, the COVID-19 pandemic is estimated to have increased the number of deaths above our normal modeling scenario by 494,000 in 2020 and 445,000 in 2021. Because method-of-disposition data is not yet available for 2020 and 2021, it is assumed that the additional deaths will follow the pattern within each state as predicted for “non-COVID-19” deaths.

Canada: There are no crematories in Northwest Territories and Nunavut, so their cremation rates are non-existent, and any cremations are conducted outside of these territories.

There is only one crematory in the Yukon Territory, which estimates its cremation rate at 69%.

Unlike the United States, where the U.S. Census Bureau produces projections of population and deaths at the national level only, Statistics Canada produces population and death projections for the country’s provinces and territories. Thus, the deaths predicted for both the nation and its provinces and territories are used in this report, with adjustments made for COVID-19-related deaths in 2020 and 2021.

The calculated percentages of burials and cremations for future years were multiplied by the model for projected deaths (with 2020 and 2021 COVID-19 adjustments) to obtain projected counts of burials and cremations; any residual was assigned to the “other” category. As a final step, a rounding protocol was applied to the projected deaths in all three categories of disposition, which might result in the totals varying slightly from Statistics Canada’s projections.

The COVID-19 pandemic created a discontinuity in the projections for deaths in 2020 and 2021. At the time of this report’s preparation (May 25, 2021), the best indicator of excess deaths attributable to the pandemic had been compiled by the University of Washington’s Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), recognized as a leading source of COVID-19 case and mortality statistics. As noted in this report, IHME’s analysis indicates that COVID-19-related deaths increased mortality in Canada by approximately 25,000 in 2020 and a predicted 21,500 in 2021.

The National Funeral Directors Association is the world’s leading, largest and most trusted association dedicated to the support of funeral professionals. NFDA provides its members with critical information, innovative tools, resources and the professional community they need to serve families, run sustainable businesses and become pillars in their communities. For more information, visit www.nfda.org or call 800-228-NFDA.



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