



REMEMBRANCE PARKS
CENTRAL VICTORIA

Grave subsidence – *Why do graves sink?*

Topping up subsided graves

RPCV conduct regular checks of recently backfilled graves, as well as monitoring graves after periods of rainfall. After identifying which graves need top-ups, staff will schedule time to carry out these works.

What causes grave subsidence?

When graves are initially dug, the dirt removed is lumpy and irregular, particularly when it has high clay content. In a cemetery setting, we do not compact the backfilled material to exclude air spaces. Over time, the soil on a backfilled grave will appear to 'sink', although this is just the process of the air escaping and loosened dirt settling into place. The amount and rate of sinkage will depend on a range of factors, such as:

- Soil type
- Grave location
- Depth of grave(s)
- Number of burials – one, two or three burials
- Amount of rainfall
- Groundwater levels

Heavy and prolonged rainfall in particular will contribute to grave subsidence.

What to do if you notice grave subsidence?

We recognise that seeing the surface of a grave sinking can cause distress to the bereaved, it is unfortunately a 'natural' phenomenon that affects all cemeteries.

Grave subsidence can also be a trip hazard; we conduct a 'rolling program' of backfilling and top dressing. Although often this can occur quickly after natural occurrences, we appreciate community notification of this matter. To assist in the process, please take note of the grave's location and other details such as the name on the memorial or area of the cemetery so that we can locate the grave on our system. After identifying the grave, we will log a maintenance request and RPCV will schedule it in to a series of top-ups. Weather permitting, most top-ups are completed within five (5) business days under normal circumstances, unless urgent attention is needed.



What is grave subsidence?

Grave subsidence refers to the appearance of graves 'sinking'. This is an entirely natural process caused by loosened soil settling into place and the natural process of the coffin collapsing overtime.

Whilst the sinkage of the surface of a grave can cause distress to the bereaved, it is a 'natural' phenomenon that affects all cemeteries.

Grave subsidence is a process that RPCV manages and rectifies when necessary, and it should not be cause for concern.

REMEMBRANCE PARKS CENTRAL VICTORIA

5 Victoria Street, Eaglehawk, VIC 3556

PO Box 268, Eaglehawk, VIC 3556

T 03 5446 1566 F 03 5446 9958

E enquiries@rpcv.com.au W www.rpcv.com.au