



Informs ■ Educates ■ Advocates

For Immediate Release: July 25, 2024

Contact: Jessica Koth, NFDA, 262-814-1535, jkoth@nfda.org

U.S. Cremation Rate is Projected to Climb to 61.9% in 2024

NFDA's annual Cremation and Burial Report tracks critical data and offers funeral professionals key insights into consumer preferences.

Brookfield, Wis. – The U.S. cremation rate is projected to increase by 1.3% since last year to 61.9% for 2024, according to the [National Funeral Directors Association's](#) (NFDA) *2024 Cremation & Burial Report*. The rate of burial is projected to decrease by 1.3% over 2023 to 33.2%. NFDA members receive complimentary access to this annual report; nonmembers can purchase the *Cremation & Burial Report* from the NFDA Store.

NFDA's annual *Cremation and Burial Report* provides comprehensive statistics, projections, and analysis of consumer preferences for cremation and burial in the United States, Canada and worldwide. This essential report highlights significant trends that are reshaping the funeral service industry.

"There's no doubt that funeral service is evolving at a rapid pace," said NFDA President Douglas R. "Dutch" Nie II, CFSP, CCO, CMFP. "The findings in the NFDA *Cremation & Burial Report* underscore the importance of understanding the changing dynamics within our industry. By staying informed about these trends, funeral directors like me can better anticipate the needs and preferences of today's consumers. This allows us to provide innovative and personalized services that honor the memories of those we serve while adapting to the shifting landscape of funeral service."

Among the key findings of the report:

Cremation Rates Rising: U.S. cremation rates are projected to increase significantly, reaching 82.1% by 2045, while burial rates are expected to fall to 13.3%. In Canada, cremation rates are projected to reach 90.7% by 2045, with burial rates at 8.7%.

Families' increased preference for cremation is influenced by cost considerations, environmental concerns, fewer religious prohibitions and a desire for simpler funeral ceremonies. The increase in the number of individuals without a religious affiliation has also contributed to the decline in traditional funerals and the rise in cremation.

Decline in Death Rates Post-COVID-19: The total number of U.S. deaths surged in 2020 and peaked in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With increased immunity to COVID-19, the overall number of deaths has been declining and is projected to continue decreasing through 2025, with nearly 300,000 fewer deaths expected in 2025 compared to 2022.

After 2025, the number of deaths is projected to rise through 2045, with a 19% increase anticipated by 2045 compared to 2022.

Revenue and Employment Trends: Industry revenue is expected to grow at an annualized rate of 1.2%, reaching \$20.2 billion by 2029. Key factors affecting funeral home revenue include per capita disposable

income, the number of deaths, the aging population, and the rise in cremations. Despite inflation, disposable income is projected to increase, positively impacting funeral expenditure.

Employment in the funeral service sector is projected to grow by 3% from 2022 to 2032, with the availability of qualified personnel remaining a major challenge.

Increasing Use of Technology: The pandemic accelerated the adoption of livestreaming services, with more than half of NFDA-member firms offering such options. Additionally, 40% of member firms offer online cremation arrangements, with 28.2% planning to introduce these options within the next three years.

NFDA members may download a complimentary copy of the *2024 NFDA Cremation & Burial Report* via the NFDA Store, [NFDA.org/Store](https://www.nfda.org/store) (click the “Downloadable Products” category). Nonmembers may purchase the report for \$175.

About the NFDA 2024 Cremation and Burial Report

The statistical projections contained in the *2024 NFDA Cremation and Burial Report* were compiled by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Applied Population Laboratory Department of Community and Environmental Sociology. 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 2002-2022. Other findings presented in the report are from proprietary NFDA research studies, such as the *2024 NFDA Consumer Awareness & Preferences Study*. 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, contact NFDA at 800-228-6332

About the National Funeral Directors Association

NFDA is the world's leading and largest funeral service association, serving 20,000 individual members who represent nearly 11,000 funeral homes in the United States and 49 countries around the world. NFDA is the trusted leader, beacon for ethics and the strongest advocate for the profession. NFDA is the association of choice because it offers funeral professionals comprehensive educational resources, tools to manage successful businesses, guidance to become pillars in their communities and the expertise to foster future generations of funeral professionals. NFDA is headquartered in Brookfield, Wis., and has an office in Washington, D.C. For more information, please contact 800-228-6332 or visit [NFDA.org/](https://www.nfda.org/).

###

Editor's Note: Members of the media may request complimentary copies of the report from NFDA Director of Public Relations Jessica Koth: 262-814-1535 or jkoth@nfda.org.