

## Strewing cremated remains on water

Occasionally, family members will collect the cremated remains of their loved one from Woodvale Crematorium with the intention of strewing the ashes into the sea, a stream or a river.

The Environment Agency has no objections to cremated remains being strewn over water, and it is not illegal to do so, provided it does not harm wildlife, the environment or cause distress to members the public.

There is no evidence to suggest that the disposal of human cremated remains in flowing rivers, streams or tidal stretches has a negative impact on the environment; however the following observations need to be considered to ensure that the process is legal, practical and a comfort for the bereaved.

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- The strewing of cremated remains should always be undertaken with dignity and discretion.
  - Access to rivers or streams adjoining private land will require the authority of the landowner.
  - It is not practical to hold ceremonies in windy weather because of the risk of the ashes being blown away.
  - Cremated remains should be spread as close to the surface of the water as reasonably possible.
  - Materials, such as wreaths, plastic urns and plastic bags must not enter the water or be left on a riverbank or beach, as this could cause distress to other visitors or harm wildlife and the environment.
  - Cremated remains must not be strewn within 1km of any drinking water supply.
  - Cremated remains must not be strewn anywhere close to bathers, anglers, within the waters of a marina or over the bridge of a river used by boaters and canoeists.
  - If cremated remains are to be strewn off the Brighton Pier, it is courteous to obtain the authority of the General Manager (telephone 01273 609361), who would be pleased to assist families with their wishes. Cremated remains are usually strewn into the sea when the pier is closed to the public, usually early in the morning or late evening.
  - Boats may be hired from a local Marina (Newhaven and Brighton) to enable the scattering of cremated remains to take place further out at sea. A suitable ceremony, religious or non-religious could take place in these circumstances.