



## *Special Report*

### **Cremation Association of North America**

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### **1996/97 Cremation Container, Disposition and Service Survey**

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#### **Introduction**

In a continuing effort to provide otherwise unavailable information on crematory operations in the United States and Canada, the Cremation Association of North America has again conducted this survey to establish cremation container, urn and remains disposition information as well as the frequency of funeral and memorial services. This year several demographic questions were added to the survey referring to age, gender and religious and ethnic backgrounds. Smith, Bucklin & Associates Market Research & Statistics Division administered the survey and compiled the aggregate report.

#### **Methodology**

In May of 1997, a comprehensive survey was mailed to 1,256 crematory operators in the United States and Canada. Each crematory was asked to provide a sample of 50 consecutive cremations taking place at their business as well as the total number of cremations in 1996. In order to increase the number of responses, the deadline was extended to July 11, 1997 and 200 follow-up phone calls were made to non-respondent crematories.

The 50 cremations were then weighted to that crematory's total annual cremation volume. The total number of cremations represented in this survey was 124,201, or 25.2 percent, of the 492,434 cremations in the United States in 1996. Throughout the report the percentages have been used to calculate the number of cremations based on the total cremations (492,434) in the United States in 1996.

A total of 241 completed surveys were received for a response rate of 19 percent. The tabulated results are considered to be fairly representative of the cremation industry with an error rate of +/- 4.8 percentage points at a 90 percent confidence level. In other words if a census of all 1,256 crematories was conducted, 90 out of 100 times the results would be within +/- 4.8 percentage points of the results presented here. In order to make this data statistically useful, the "unknown" responses were not included in the calculation of percentages.

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## 1996/97 Cremation Container, Disposition and Service Survey

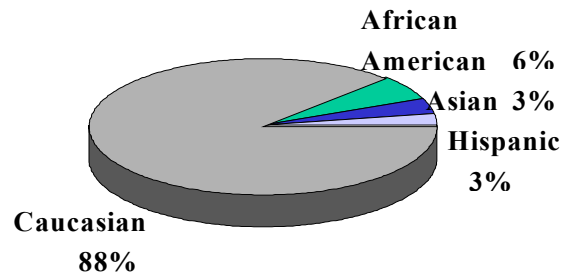
### Age

<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>
74.0 years	69.4 years

### Gender

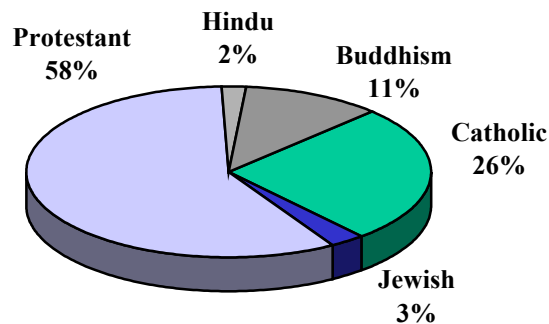
<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
51.9%	48.1%

### Race and Ethnicity



\* "Unknown/Unattainable" responses were not included in percentages

### Religious Affiliation



\* "Unknown/Unattainable" responses were not included in percentages

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## 1996/97 Cremation Container, Disposition and Service Survey

1996 U.S. cremations totaled 492,434

### Body was cremated:

In alternative container	80.2%	394,932
In wood casket *	8.3%	40,872
In cloth covered casket *	7.2%	35,455
In body bag	1.8%	8,864
With body wrappings	1.1%	5,417
As received with no container	1.0%	4,924
In metal casket *	0.4%	1,970
Total	100%	492,434

\* Total casketed cremations 15.9% 78,297

### Cremated Remains Disposition

<sup>1</sup> Delivered to cemetery	40.7%	200,421	
Taken home	35.8%	176,291	Eventually will be buried, placed in columbarium, scattered or kept at home
<sup>2</sup> Scattered as directed	17.8%	87,653	Not on cemetery property
<sup>3</sup> Not picked up	5.7%	28,069	
Total	100%	492,434	

#### <sup>1</sup> 40.7% of all cremated remains were delivered to the cemetery and were:

Buried	56.8%	113,839
Placed in columbarium	25.6%	51,308
Scattered on dedicated property	15.2%	30,464
Placed in common grave	2.4%	4,810
Total	100%	200,421

#### <sup>3</sup> 5.7% of all cremated remains were not picked up, they were:

Placed in storage on premises	45.6%	12,800
Disposed in proper and legal way	32.4%	9,094
Placed in permanent vault	22.0%	6,175
Total	100%	28,069

#### <sup>2</sup> 17.8 % of all cremated remains were scattered as directed outside the cemetery:

Over water	72.7%	63,724
On land	27.3%	23,929
Total	100%	87,653

#### Total scattered:

Scattered as directed	17.8%	87,653
Scattered on dedicated property	6.1%	30,464
Total	23.9%	118,117

### Urn Usage

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Body was accompanied by a pre-purchased urn	22.3%	109,813
Cremated remains were returned in a purchased permanent urn (includes pre-purchased urns above)	56.8%	279,703
Keepsake urns were purchased by themselves and in conjunction with other urns	11.4%	56,137

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### Was there a service prior to cremation?

Yes	33.0%	162,503
No	67.0%	329,931
Total	100%	492,434

### Was a memorial service held after cremation?

Yes	43.7%	215,194
No	56.3%	277,240
Total	100%	492,434

24 percent or 118,184 cremations had a memorial service both before and after cremation.

### Cremated Remains Disposition Breakdown

Taken home	35.8%	176,291
Buried	23.1%	113,839
Scattered water/land	17.8%	87,653
Placed in columbarium	10.4%	51,308
Scattered on dedicated property	6.2%	30,464
Not picked up	5.7%	28,069
Placed in common grave	1.0%	4,810
Total	100%	492,434