

MEDIA RELEASE

Ruapehu District Council



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PERMIT REQUIREMENT FOR MEMORIAL MONUMENTS (HEADSTONES)

Ruapehu District Council (RDC) is to introduce the requirement for a permit prior to the erection of a memorial headstone on grave plots in council owned cemeteries.

RDC Group Environmental Services, Margaret Hawthorne, said that council had decided to adopt an application process for memorial headstones to ensure that monuments are of the correct dimension and materials prior to their erection.

"As grave plots sit quite close together we have had instances in the past where headstones have breached the space required for a headstone on either side and for the plot to the rear," she said.

"As the erection of a headstone can be a significant expense at a highly emotional time council wants to have a process in place that ensures that clear, concise information on the allowable dimensions and materials are available to council's customer and the stonemason."

Mrs Hawthorne said that investigation of the majority of North Island councils showed that over 80% of them require an application for a permit to erect a memorial headstone and of those most all charged a processing fee for the permit that averaged \$47.00.

"Ruapehu District Council has decided however that we will not charge a processing fee for the memorial headstone permit at the present time," she said.

Mrs Hawthorne added that people should note that no work on installing a headstone can take place until a permit is approved by council and returned to the applicant."

"Another advantage of requiring headstones to be permitted is that inscription information can be recorded on council's database that can then assist relatives and others who may need to conduct a cemetery record search to locate where a loved one is buried," she said.

"The new headstone permitting process will be active by the new financial year of 1 July 2011."

DAVID HAMMOND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CJH : PRW