

CLEANING GRAVESTONES

Be flexible and relax your ideas about the “perfect stone”. Remember, old stones don't need to look brand new, and cleaning should only be done to remove plant growth and soil that may hasten corrosion of stones.

The harshest, quickest, or cheapest method is often not the gentlest. Household cleaners/bleach are TOO HARSH and can damage stones. NEVER sandblast a gravestone. DO NOT use wire or metal brushes of any kind, they can scratch, damage or stain the stone.

Begin with plain water and a soft bristle brush. Use a pump sprayer to saturate the stone with water. Using a bucket for rinsing your tools can often return polluted water to the stone. ALWAYS test your cleaning method in an inconspicuous place before starting.

Removing biologicals:

There are one or two cleaners on the market. We use and recommend D/2 which is available from Atlas Preservation. <https://atlaspreservation.com/> or (860) 426-3111. D/2 Biological Solution is a biodegradable, easy to use liquid that removes stains from mold, algae, mildew, lichens and air pollutants. It is effective on marble, granite, limestone, brownstone, travertine, masonry, terra cotta, concrete, stucco, wood, and other architectural surfaces including monuments, sculpture and headstones.

Friends of Decatur Cemetery has a group of volunteers who are trained to work on monument cleaning. We don't charge a fee, but we do ask for a donation to our fund so we can purchase the D/2 cleaning solution. Email us at friendsofdecaturcemetery@gmail.com if you would like our help in cleaning your markers.

Remember: you are hoping to preserve the memory of a life for future generations. Each stone represents someone who was loved by somebody at some time. Every life is worth remembering.