

CLEANING GRAVESTONES

Old stones don't need to look brand new, but when cleaning is needed, we adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. This document states, "Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used."



If you choose to clean your markers yourself, begin with plain water and a soft bristle brush. Use a pump sprayer to saturate the stone with water and always test your cleaning method in an inconspicuous place before starting. You may also choose to use a commercial cleaning solution.

We use and recommend Endurance Restoration Gravestone & Monument Cleaner which is available from [Atlas Preservation](#). This is a biodegradable liquid that removes stains, mold, algae, mildew, lichens and air pollutants. It is effective on stone monuments and headstones, masonry, wood and more. ,

Friends of Decatur Cemetery has a group of volunteers trained in monument cleaning who can clean your family's gravestones for you. We don't charge a fee, but we do ask for a donation to our fund so we can purchase the cleaning solution and supplies. We provide this as a service to our families and donations we receive also support our work in cleaning markers in the Old Cemetery.

The amount of solution required to clean a particular marker depends on the age, amount of staining and the porousness of the stone. Generally, flat markers require \$50 worth of cleaning solution and upright markers require \$150. The methods we use take time. We do a thorough cleaning and then reassess before adding more solution.

Please complete the request form [HERE](#) if you would like our help in cleaning your markers.