



Under the Maple Leaf – Respecting the Canadian Flag - Q&A

Why is Beechwood Cemetery collecting old Canadian Flags?

“As the National Cemetery of Canada, Beechwood is honoured to lead this initiative to respectfully retire old Canadian Flags. Many Canadians have tattered, faded, or ripped flags stored away without knowing how to properly dispose of them.

This program provides a dignified solution, ensuring that every flag is retired with honour and respect. By bringing these flags to Beechwood, Canadians can participate in a national act of remembrance and pride.”

Why is cremation the only proper way to dispose of a Canadian Flag?

“Cremation is the only respectful and dignified way to retire a Canadian Flag. It ensures the flag is disposed of with honour, preventing it from being discarded in a way that could be seen as disrespectful.

At Beechwood, we use a state-of-the-art cremation facility that ensures minimal environmental impact. This method aligns with traditional practices and reflects the respect our national symbol deserves.”

What is the significance of Heritage Canada’s support for this initiative?

“Heritage Canada’s support underscores the national importance of this program. It reinforces the role of the Maple Leaf as a symbol of our shared identity and history. With their backing, we’re able to reach more Canadians and educate the public about the proper way to retire the flag while celebrating its legacy.”

Can anyone participate?

“Absolutely! This initiative is open to all Canadians, no matter where they are. We encourage people from coast to coast to coast to participate by sending their old flags to Beechwood or dropping them off at one of our partner locations. It’s a wonderful way to show national pride and respect for our flag.”

How can people send their flags?

“Canadians can mail their old flags directly to Beechwood Cemetery at:

Honour our Flag
c/o: Beechwood Cemetery
280 Beechwood Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1L 8A6

What happens to the flags once they are collected?

“All collected flags will be respectfully placed in specially prepared containers and honoured during a solemn sunset ceremony at Beechwood Cemetery. The ceremony will include a dignified procession led by RCMP and military representatives, a new flag-raising, and a respectful cremation of the retired flags. It’s a powerful tribute to our national symbol and its legacy.”

Can the public attend the ceremony?

“Yes, the public is welcome to attend the sunset ceremony at Beechwood Cemetery on June 18 2025. It’s a unique opportunity to witness the honour and respect given to our national symbol. For those unable to attend in person, we will be sharing highlights on social media to ensure everyone can take part, no matter where they are in Canada.”

How can organizations get involved?

“We’re actively seeking community partners to help collect flags and spread the word about the initiative. Organizations can participate by serving as collection points, promoting the program through their networks, or joining us at the ceremony. We’d love to hear from anyone interested in supporting this national act of remembrance and pride.”

Why should I participate?

“Participating in this initiative is a simple yet powerful way to show respect for our national flag. It’s about honouring a symbol that represents our unity, values, and history as Canadians. By sending your retired flag to Beechwood, you’re ensuring it receives the dignified farewell it deserves.”

Where can I get more information?

“For more information about the program, how to send your flags, or how to get involved, visit <https://www.beechwoodottawa.ca/en/foundation/under-maple-leaf-respecting-canadian-flag>.

We’re here to help every step of the way!”