

## 2018 Board

Chair

**Jeff Hagel**

Vice-Chair

**Barbara McKinley**

Treasurer

**Scott Barbour**

Board Members / Education

Committee

**Shawn Feist**

**Wendy Lickacz**

Media Spokesperson

**Jeff Hagel**

AFSRB Staff

Executive Director

**Karen Carruthers**

Administrator

**Lori Elanik**

Inspector/Investigator

**Del August**

Office

180, 2755 Broadmoor Blvd  
Sherwood Park, AB T8H 2W7

Tel: 780.452.6130

Toll Free: 1.800.563.4652

Fax: 780.452.6085

Email: [office@afsrab.ca](mailto:office@afsrab.ca)

Website: [www.afsrab.ca](http://www.afsrab.ca)

## From the Chair By Jeff Hagel



The Alberta Funeral Service Regulatory Board (AFSRB) is the guiding body for our profession. It's an honour working with both our industry members, Scott Barbour and Shawn Feist and our public members, Wendy Lickacz and Barb McKinley as well as our newest public member Debbie Miller.

Our board has benefited from the extensive regulatory knowledge our Executive Director, Karen Carruthers has brought to the AFSRB and we appreciate the new approach of our inspector, Del August, and the assistance of our part time office administrator Lori Elanik.

I find myself often asked about complaints. You might find it interesting that the Board has not been set up to hear complaints.

Our approach is for all Board members to be at an arm's length from complaints in order to maintain impartiality if complaints escalate to an official hearing or disciplinary action. That is why all complaints are handled through our investigator Del and Executive Director Karen.

We recently received a legal opinion on our structure for complaints that has confirmed our approach; the Board does not even see the redacted versions of complaints, just summaries that we share with our members.

To view complaints with disciplinary actions taken please visit <http://afsrab.ca/discipline.asp>

The AFSRB has recently set up a Continuity Committee with our past Chair, Christine Rapp and previous Board member, Dorothea Schaab to act as advisers for our Inspector and Executive Director. They will share their expertise with our current and future Board members to assist with continuity moving forward.

Official complaints are extremely low in our profession (less than ½ of 1%). With only one inspector for 166 funeral homes and 637 licensed funeral professionals (148 licensed funeral directors, 24 licensed embalmers, 372 licensed funeral directors and embalmers and 93 licensed pre need sales people) our Inspector has a lot on his plate for only being **part time**.

We are excited to share with you what we have been working on in this issue of our newsletter.

*Continued on page 5*

*Education Credit deadline is March 31, 2019*

## Continuing Education required for all 2019 License Renewals

Yes, it's *that* time again.....already. Time to make sure that your 12 education credits are completed. The deadline is March 31, 2019.

In Alberta, each funeral professional is required to attain **12 education credits** during a designated three year period. For the period ending on March 31, 2019, the education credits available are as follows:

- **3 credits** - by attending the **AFSRB-mandated course** delivered by Alberta Health Services in the summer of 2017. There are a few of you who were unable to attend the 2017 courses. If you missed the earlier presentations, there will be an opportunity to attend the course this fall.
- **9 credits** - by taking courses determined by each funeral professional and relating to one or more of the **core competencies** ( one hour of class/online learning required for each education credit). Please see the AFSRB website under the Information tab for additional information on Core Competencies.

As a reminder, the core competencies are specified below together with examples of the course topics which could apply to each core competency:

**Business Practice** - time management, accounting, technology and computer skills, writing

**Communication** - public speaking, organizing presentations, conflict resolution, psychology

**Professionalism** - course presenter, ethics, code of conduct, self-care, committee participant

**Technical Expectations** - crematory/embalming updates, OHS, religious/cultural traditions.

There are a variety of interesting courses offered through educational institutions, online presentations and funeral services industry conferences.

There is still plenty of time for you to complete all of your education credits by March 31, 2019.

If you have any questions, Karen Carruthers at the AFSRB office will be able to answer them for you. ♦

## Continuing Education - Mandatory Course

The mandatory course as designated by the AFSRB is a requirement for all licensees who are renewing their licence for April 1, 2019.

***Those licensees who do not take the course will not be able to renew their licence.***

There have been notifications by email regarding the courses, but it is the licensees responsibility to ensure that this requirement has been met.

There are new sessions of the mandatory course to be provided by AHS and the dates are as follows:

Two sessions have already been held on November 8, one in Red Deer and one in Lethbridge.

There are two sessions coming up: Tuesday November 27, Calgary (9 am – 12 pm), and Friday December 7, Edmonton (9 am – 12 pm).

There are also two tentative additional dates: Monday February 11 in Calgary and Friday February 15 in Edmonton.

To register in one of these sessions, please go to: [www.ahs.ca/ephed](http://www.ahs.ca/ephed), or contact the AFSRB office for more information. ♦



## New Premises

The AFSRB has moved its office to a new location in Sherwood Park, Alberta (180, 2755 Broadmoor Blvd).

The new location offers a number of benefits including our own boardroom, ample parking, easy access off the Yellowhead Trail and Anthony Henday, more privacy and accessibility (main floor). We are still adding the final touches, but it was a great decision to move to our new premises. If you are in the neighborhood, please feel free to stop by for a tour. ♦

**AFSRB  
logo  
and link**



The AFSRB is implementing a requirement to have the AFSRB logo with a link to the AFSRB website on all funeral services business websites, on the homepage in a manner that is easily readable.

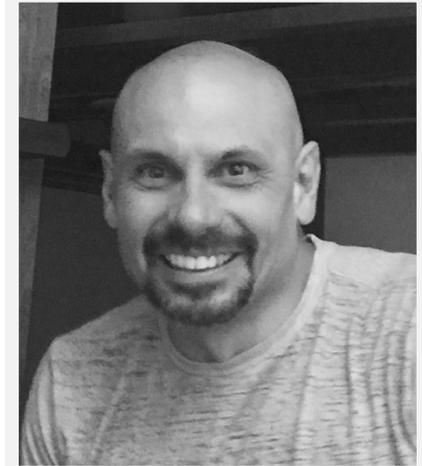
The AFSRB logo can be found on our website under the information tab.

The inspector will be checking for compliance on this during the inspections starting in April 2019. ♦

## Inspector's corner By Del August

Hi Everyone,

I am writing my first newsletter as the Inspector of the AFSRB. I have been in the role for a year now and on my own since April 01, 2018. It has been a great learning experience thus far and I would like to thank all of you whom I have seen so far. You have been very kind and accommodating allowing me to adjust to my new duties.



Speaking of inspections, I am impressed how most businesses are so well organized and appear to be very well managed and maintained. I will share with you some of the trends and issues that I see while travelling the province doing these inspections.

The first and most common issue is the register required by section 15(2)(b) of the Funeral Services Act General Regulations. Now I know this subject has been on the table for some time and that, depending on the number of pre-need contracts a business enters, it can be a lot of work but the AFSRB has made it clear it must be done. I am not going to harp on this any further only to advise everyone that if you need an example of the register in the form of an excel spreadsheet I have one. Please contact me and I will be more than happy to share it.

I have also noticed that some businesses have cremated remains that are being stored more than 5 years. I hear that some are related to spousal contracts and are waiting for the partner to pass away. If there is a contract verifying this that's fine. The reason the purchaser signs the five-year clause on the contract is to prevent these remains from being stored at a funeral services business indefinitely. I realize you do not want to scatter a loved one's cremated remains only to have the family call a week later and ask for the ashes, however, there are other options. Funeral services businesses can place the cremated remains in a common plot, niche or crypt. Families after 5 years have the option of retrieving the remains with opening and closing fees. The legislation is clear on the storage of cremated remains and the timeline.

Please know that my phone is always on and you can call me with your questions or concerns and I will do my best to assist you. Well, that's all I have for now and I look forward to seeing you on the back half of 2018 and into 2019. ♦

# AFSRB Advertising Policy Update

*The AFSRB has updated the advertising policy to include information in regard to pricing. The following is the new wording which has been added.*

Visit the AFSRB website to view the complete Advertising Policy.

## A general statement regarding accuracy and clarity in advertising:

Advertisements must not contain, directly or by implication, make inaccurate, deceptive or otherwise misleading claims, statements, illustrations, or representations.

*Funeral Services Act Section 13(f) and (g)*

b) Advertisements must not omit relevant information if the omission results in an advertisement that is deceptive or misleading. In assessing the truthfulness and accuracy of a message, advertising claim or representation, the concern is not with the intent of the sender or precise legality of the

presentation. Rather the focus is on the message, claim or representation as received or perceived, i.e. the general impression conveyed by the advertisement.

*Funeral Services Act Section 13 (f)*

## Pricing

(c) All pertinent details of an advertisement must be clearly and understandably stated and should include all items necessary or usually required. A representation that a service or item is necessary, if it is not constitutes a deceptive act or practice.

*Funeral Services Act Section 13 (d) and (f) and (j)*

(d) Disclaimers and asterisked or footnoted information must not contradict more prominent aspects of the message and should be located and presented in such a manner as to be clearly legible and/or audible.

(e) When providing a price (including but not limited to print, phone, radio, TV, web, and email) the operator shall include an explanation of all of the conditions of sale that relate to the price and a full description of the goods and services that are included in the advertised price.

*As per the legislated requirements as listed in the General Regulation Section 8.*

## Leak proof containers

As you are aware, Environmental Public Health (EPH) Officers have been conducting inspections at all funeral services businesses in the province since the fall of 2017. One of the items that was brought to our attention by the EPH officers is Section 3 (Routine handling of bodies not known to be infected with specified communicable disease) under the Bodies of Deceased Persons Regulation. This section states:

3(1) This section applies in addition to section 2 in respect of the handling of bodies that are not known to be infected with a specified communicable disease.

(2) A responsible person in respect of a body

referred to in subsection (1) must ensure that the body is enclosed in a container as soon as practically possible after the time of death.

**(3) The container used under subsection (2) must be suitable to the condition of the body to contain all body fluids.**

This section requires that containers used for deceased persons must be essentially "leak proof". This is not a new requirement, but one that may have been overlooked. In order to ensure compliance with this requirement of the Bodies of Deceased Persons Regulation, the inspector for the AFSRB will be spot checking the containers (caskets and cremation containers) at the funeral services business locations. ♦

Will home-made caskets and caskets not sold by the Funeral Home also be required to be leak proof?

To meet the requirements of the Bodies Of Deceased Persons regulation all caskets and cremation containers used for deceased persons must be leak proof.

## From the Chair

*Continued from page 1*

Investigating official complaints and inspections is how the AFSRB maintains the highest level of competence and ethics for funeral service professionals. We encourage all those in funeral service to contact the AFSRB office if you feel anything should be looked into as my goal as your AFSRB Chair is to protect the image and professionalism of our profession.

In this issue you will read about our new advertising policy that has been written to hold our profession to a higher standard. The AFSRB welcomes correspondence from all those in our profession to ensure this new policy is being adhered to.

The past few years have been full of change and we will continue to evolve and work at pushing all of those on the Board to set and maintain the highest level of competence, ethics and educational standards for funeral service professionals as this is the mission of the AFSRB. ♦

## Funeral contract merchandise

Under section 8 of the Funeral Services Act General Regulation, it states that a funeral services contract shall contain a detailed listing of the goods and services to be provided by the funeral services business. The AFSRB wanted to clarify “detailed listing” and provide the expectation of what needs to be on the contract, particularly

the pre-need contract. On the contract there must be a

## Electronic licensing

The AFSRB will be sending out a Request for Proposal, to obtain quotes on a computer system that will be able to manage the information related to licences, complaints and inspections all in one location. The ability for the system to handle online renewals is something that is also being considered with this system. ♦

## Licence renewals

Licence renewals for April 2019 will include the requirement to provide continuing education information for each licensee. The office is asking that renewals are provided by March 1, 2019 so there is enough time to review the continuing education and issue the licenses on time. ♦

## Disciplinary Action

The AFSRB website has a listing of the recent disciplinary action that has been taken by the AFSRB.

The following items are currently on the website under the information tab and the website contains additional information regarding the action.

### June 2018 - Celebrate Life Funeral Services Ltd.

#### - legislative contraventions

Board decision to apply administrative penalties and pre-need licence suspension.

Board requirement for owners to complete Alberta law course.

*Decision not appealed*

### June 2018 - Brittany Tucker - unlicensed activity

Board decision to apply an administrative penalty.

*Decision not appealed*

### January 2018 - The Caring Group Corporation - unlicensed activity.

Board decision to apply an administrative penalty.

*Decision not appealed, administrative penalty paid.*

**Additional actions are listed on [AFSRB.ab.ca](http://AFSRB.ab.ca)** ♦

manufacturer’s identifying number or manufacturer’s item name so that the exact item that was purchased can be identified at a later date when the contract is being fulfilled. The AFSRB inspector will be checking for this information to be shown on the contracts. ♦

**Can Funeral Homes make up new names for caskets?**

**Casket names must match a manufacturer’s identifying name or number**

## Who Controls Disposition?

This is one of the most frequently asked questions at the AFSRB office. Here is the scenario and see if you can determine who has the right to control disposition.

Mr. John Doedoe has passed away at age 63 without a will.

His adult interdependent partner (common law), whose status as common law has been confirmed, and his two children, from a previous marriage, arrive at the funeral services business to make arrangements.

During these arrangements, the funeral director is made aware that Mr. Doedoe was never divorced from his first wife although he hadn't seen her in 12 years.

Under section 36 of the Funeral Services Act General Regulation, does the funeral director need to contact the spouse of Mr. Doedoe to make the arrangements because they are still legally married? See below for the answer. ♦



*We wish You and  
Your Family  
A Merry Christmas  
and a Healthy and  
Happy New Year.*

*The Alberta Funeral Services Regulatory Board*

## FERC Update

The Funeral Education Review Committee (FERC) met in August to continue task work, provide input and recommendations to the AFSRB.

FERC has completed the task of creating standardized funeral arrangement and embalmer logs for students. These logs have been reviewed by the AFSRB and some additional amendments made.

The finalized logs will be provided early next year to the two approved schools for student use in the province of Alberta.

The AFSRB has also approved an application form for Student Eligibility that was drafted by FERC.

The purpose of this application and issuing an Eligibility Certificate (by the AFSRB) to all current students working in a funeral services business is that only students who hold a current Eligibility Certificate will be permitted to engage in any activities which are restricted to licensed individuals or trainees under supervision.

Specifically, logged activities for the purpose of training and credentialing can only be completed by individuals with a current Eligibility Certificate.

The application for Student Eligibility will be sent out with the 2019 renewal forms and all students who are logging hours will be required to obtain an Eligibility Certificate effective April 1, 2019.

As always the AFSRB will continue to advise on any further developments from FERC. ♦

**Answer:** Under Section 36(2)(b), the order of priority clarifies this situation by stating, the spouse or adult interdependent partner of the deceased if the spouse or adult interdependent partner was living with the deceased at the time of death. So even though Mr. Doedoe was not divorced from his previous wife, he was not living with her at the time of his death and therefore there is no reason to contact her in regard to the arrangements as she would not factor into the order of priority. The common law would have the authority to make the arrangements. ♦

## Survey follow up

The AFSRB sent out a survey with the licence renewals earlier this year and we wanted to provide the follow up on the results and feedback that was received.

The survey asked about clarification to the wording in the legislation for licence renewals. The legislation for a new licence refers to being “actively engaged” in the operation of a funeral services business, but the renewal of a licence only refers to “intending to work”. There were 214 surveys received which represented 50 separate funeral businesses. The results are as follows:

**Question 1 read:** *Do you think that the AFSRB should permit individuals the ability to renew their licence while not intending to work in a funeral business?* **The responses were: Yes - 105 No-109**

**Question 2 read:** *Because a licensee must intend to work at a funeral services business to have their licence renewed, how many hours do you think would meet the requirement of “intending to work”?* **The response were: 0 hours – 42, 1-8 hours – 32, 9-40 hours – 37, 41-80 hours – 25, 81-160 hours – 32, 161-400 hours – 25, Other (400+) – 21.**

**Question 3 read:** *If you are the business manager, how many of your licensees are not actively engaged in the day to day work at your funeral services business (work less than 1 day per month)?* **Total number of staff reported that fell into this category was 45.** (This number could include duplicate numbers reported from the same business).

The AFSRB also considered that all of the other jurisdictions in Canada who responded (BC, SASK, MAN, ONT and NFLD) do not have a requirement for a certain number of hours to be worked in the funeral services business in order to maintain a licence.

As shown by the variety of results from the survey, no clear consensus on how to define “intending to work” was provided, so **the AFSRB has decided to not move forward with any additional clarification to the legislation or any number of required hours to maintain a licence.** ♦

## Welcome to our newest Industry



## Member

We welcome our newest Industry member to the Board, Shawn Feist from Serenity Family Funeral Service. Although Shawn was elected in March, we haven't had a chance to formally welcome him in our Newsletter. We are happy to have Shawn on the Board. He is already getting involved and is serving on the Education Committee which

---

## In This Issue ...

From the Chair	Page 1
Continuing Education	Page 2
The Inspector's Report	Page 3
Advertising Policy Updated	Page 4
Disciplinary Action	Page 5
Who Controls Disposition?	Page 6
FERC Report	Page 6

---

The AFSRB Newsletter can also be found  
on our website at [www.afsrb.ab.ca](http://www.afsrb.ab.ca)