



Filming in City of Athens Cemeteries

The City of Athens operates two cemeteries in the City. West Union Street Cemetery (also known as Athens Cemetery) and West State Street Cemetery. The City follows similar guidelines to filming and photography in cemeteries as National Cemeteries. The following standards are considered when approving:

For Family Member/Public/News Media

Filming or photography is allowable so long as the conditions outlined below are met. Approval is not needed for photography and filming for private individual, genealogical (including findagrave), historical, or familial purposes.

- Filming or photography within the cemetery will not interfere with normal cemetery operations, disrupt the peaceful ambiance of the cemetery or violate a family's expressed desire for privacy.
- Filming or photography of individual headstones and markers, committal services and burials by family members, the news media or the public will be allowed if done in a respectful manner.
- News media should contact the Deputy Service-Safety Director in advance to conduct a news story or to cover a committal service or interment.
- Restriction on news media may be implemented by cemetery staff in order to comply with the wishes of family members, to maintain decorum or enforce Cemetery or City policies.
- News media are not required to reimburse the City for expenses incurred while covering a newsworthy event in the public interest.

Entertainment/Commercial

Filming or photography for entertainment or commercial purposes is permitted under limited circumstances, including film students with the following conditions being met:

- The film company or group must contact the City of Athens at least one week in advance to request permission and schedule the date/time of the filming.
- Must have a licensed drone operator and show the license, if using a drone to film.
- Must show FAA clearance to operate in the airspace.
- Must sign a City of Athens Indemnification Agreement/Property Release and have explicit approval from the City in order to proceed.
- Filming or photography within the cemetery will not interfere with normal cemetery operations, disrupt the peaceful ambiance of the cemetery or violate a family's expressed desire for privacy.
- The City reserves the right to document filming activities at cemeteries for preservation, training, and purposes for the public good.



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Other Information

- Political or partisan activities of any nature, including filming of campaign ads, are not permitted on cemetery grounds.
- The City of Athens retains the right to approve, disapprove or halt filming or photography that interferes with normal cemetery operations, violates a family's expressed desire for privacy or depicts the City inaccurately and/or Veterans negatively.
- Any areas modified by filming/photography operation must be fully restored to its condition prior to filming/photography operations.
- All equipment, supplies, and materials of the filming/photography operation must be completely removed from the cemetery.
- All garbage, waste, and debris must be removed and taken back with the film/photography crew.

Requests that are Generally Approved:

- Documentaries/Life sketches of persons interred at the cemetery
- Associated "B" roll for documentaries and narratives
- Film and photography that enhance or discover historical or cultural elements of the City, Southeast Ohio, or Appalachia.

Requests that are Generally Denied:

- Requests that are outside of the normal open hours of the Cemeteries including any filming or photography after dark.
- Requests that do not follow the Cemetery Rules and Regulations
- Requests made within one week of anticipated film date.
- Horror films, ghost stories, and comedies that are specifically using the cemetery as the backdrop or source for scenes OR any portion of filming that depicts the cemetery as a "haunted" place.
- Depictions of those interred that are inaccurate, false, or misleading.
- Any filming that perpetuates stereotypes or discriminates related to: race, religion, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, marital status, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable state, local or federal law as well as cultural stereotypes.