

COACHELLA VALLEY PUBLIC CEMETERY DISTRICT

Quarterly Newsletter

Q3 • July – September 2023

What's New

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Cemetery District Recognized for Prioritizing Financial Transparency

The Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) has named Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District as one of only three such organizations in California receiving the "District of Distinction" for its sound fiscal management policies.

"SDLF provides an independent audit review of the last three years of the district's operations to ensure prudent fiscal practices," said SDLF Chief Executive Officer Neil McCormick. The committee members who review the audits are volunteers from the special district community, including district controllers, directors of finance and certified general managers.



In addition, the District's board of directors and executive staff must also show proof of educational training in public governance and compliance with ethics and harassment prevention training.

To receive the recognition, the District's website must meet transparency requirements, including election procedures and deadlines. Each District of Distinction is also required to post board meeting schedules and agendas, current district budgets, their most recent financial audits, and a list of board members and staff compensation or a link to the State Controller's webpage containing the data.

According to the California Special District Association website, only 41 special districts and three cemetery districts currently hold the "District of Distinction" designation. According to the Institute for Local Government, California has nearly 3,300 special districts.



10-Year Capital Improvement Plan Highlights

Fleet Management



The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery is one of the busiest public cemeteries in the State, performing over 1,300 interments in the last two years. The activity of the District requires a significant fleet of heavy operating equipment, maintenance and multiuse vehicles to support the work. The fleet is maintained by both outside contract support and internal routine maintenance.

The District has commenced a 10-year capital improvement plan to cycle in new fleet vehicles to replace our oldest equipment. This includes the purchase of a new backhoe, tractors, a dump truck and front loader equipment. The total investment in equipment to support District operations over two budget cycles is \$380,080. The new equipment plays a vital role in maintaining the quality and efficiency of service the families we work with have come to expect.



Updated Winter Hours

As a reminder, cemetery public access times change as winter approaches. Due to the reduced daylight hours, the cemetery will close earlier during the fall and winter months. These changes are made to protect the public, as the cemetery does not have lights and poses both driving and general visibility hazards once nighttime arrives.

Beginning November 5, the closing time will change to 5:30 p.m. and remain so through mid-February. Please follow the direction of security at closing so that all may exit the grounds safely and swiftly.



District Films ‘What to Expect’ Content to Guide Families Through Services



The District is proud to announce the impending release of a new video series designed to assist our families with their preparation for services. The two videos, “What to Expect – Burial,” and “What to Expect – Columbarium,” will help to better inform families in advance of their scheduled service of what they can expect upon arrival. The interment of a loved one is a solemn occasion that deserves the highest level of regard. The District is committed to providing all of our families with the support they need to conduct the services respectfully, and we trust this video series will help support that goal.

Principal filming was completed for the English and Spanish “What to Expect” videos in September; the District hopes to release the videos to the public in October 2023.

Cemetery Landscape Improvements Continue

The District is completing work on the Landscape Improvement Capital project authorized as part of the 2022-2023 budget. The multi-phase project has focused on the front entrance of the cemetery immediately off Avenue 52. Both the area surrounding the front office and the area directly in front of the office have been addressed. Areas previously featuring rocks have been refreshed, and areas that were previously comprised of woodchips have been removed and replaced with matching rocks.

In addition, the District has managed areas of the cemetery that were subject to significant elevation increases due to continual sand drift. Crews have leveled the dirt along curbs and some portions of cemetery headstones to restore “curb level” to these areas. Curbs that provide for vehicle and ADA access have also been lowered and smoothed for ease of access.

Once completed, the project will represent a \$30,000 investment in the beautification of the cemetery over the last 18 months. The investment, along with several other capital projects, reflects the Board of Trustees’ commitment to maintain high standards of care and upkeep for the cemetery for generations to come.



Dia de los Muertos Parking Restrictions

Please note the cemetery will have parking and traffic restrictions in place for Dia de los Muertos on November 1 and 2. All vehicles may continue to enter the cemetery using the main entrance off Avenue 52. However, for public safety, parking will not be allowed on the grounds during these days. All cars will be directed to the back lot located adjacent to the cemetery for parking.

Due to traffic restrictions in place, there will also be no parking or stopping allowed along Avenue 52 directly in front of the cemetery during these dates. The District thanks you in advance for your understanding.



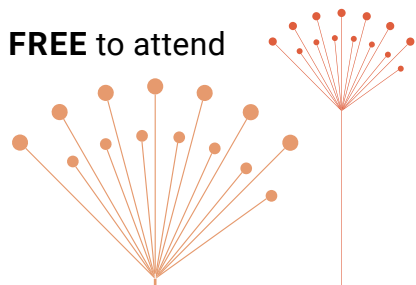
Upcoming Events

Outdoor Presentation of "Coco" the Movie

When:
Wednesday, November 1, 2023
5 p.m.

Where:
Front of Cemetery (Behind Office)

FREE to attend



Dia de los Muertos Celebration

When:
Thursday, November 2, 2023
11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Where:
Coachella Valley Public Cemetery

FREE to attend

Event updates can be found on Facebook by clicking [**HERE**](#)

Veterans Day Ceremony

In partnership with the American Legion Post 739, Indio

When:
Saturday, November 11, 2023
11 a.m.

Where:
Veterans Memorial

FREE to attend

Event updates can be found on Facebook by clicking [**HERE**](#)

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Board of Trustees meets on the second Friday of each month, at 8 a.m, unless otherwise changed to accommodate an observed holiday. The public is welcome to attend and encouraged to submit ideas and suggestions at the meetings, which are held at 82-847 Avenue 52 in Coachella. For information, visit coachellacemetery.org/governance/board.