

Where Do Our Pets Go After They Leave Us?

That is a question that many pet owners have, and one that most of us have no idea how to answer. We all imagine a rainbow bridge or heaven that our pets cross over with green lawns, white picket fences and all of the toys and food they can manage. This image helps us to heal and move on with our lives without them.

Unfortunately, many people are not even aware of the animal aftercare options that exist before they lose a beloved animal. Therefore, they do not have the time necessary to carefully consider what is right for their family before the animal is taken away and either cremated, buried, or rendered.

The truth is, when your pet is put to rest by your veterinarian, or passes due to natural causes, it is your responsibility to decide what should be done next with the remains. There are several options, including cremation and burial of your pet, where your animals are handled with respect and dignity.

Many people are too distraught at the time of their pet's passing to make any kind of decision, let alone an immediate choice of which animal aftercare service to use. This often leaves the veterinarian, or even more commonly the "hospital policy," responsible for where to send the animals' remains.

If cremation or burial is not chosen for aftercare, many, but not all, veterinary hospitals send the remains of animals that have been loved and adored to disposal companies, where they are then rendered. This has been a standard practice and accepted method of dealing with pet remains for decades, but thankfully, many concerned veterinarians and animal lovers would like to change this fact.

Guardian Animal Aftercare is an animal crematorium offering the highest quality animal aftercare available for companion animals including whole horse cremation services. Guardian offers including grief support for families, donations to nonprofit organizations for animals, and hopes to stop the rendering of animals by offering communal cremations at the same cost hospitals have been paying for animal disposal through rendering.

The rendering process is a horrific way of disposing of a pet, which once was so precious to us. The process of rendering goes back many years, and is a way of getting rid of "waste", and making a profit on its byproducts. This waste can contain thousands of dead dogs, cats, puppies and kittens, as well as diseased wildlife of all types, plastic packaging, etc. The bodies are dumped into the rendering vats, including their flea collars, ID tags and a variety of powerful drugs used to euthanize them. Recycling "waste" is a good thing, but do you really consider your deceased family pet to be waste?

After trucks deliver the "waste" to the rendering plants, the material is minced and fed into a vessel where it is steam-cooked to 250 degrees or more and then the "stew" is cooked for 20 to 90 minutes. The fat is siphoned off the top, filtered

and sent through centrifuges to further refine it. Chemical manufacturers turn much of it into fatty acids for lubricants, lipstick, cement, polish, inks and waxes. Other parts of this concoction including gelatinous layers, tallow, and grease, go into thousands of products we all use and consume, including soaps, candles, and gummy candies.

The heavier protein material on the bottom of the vats goes through a separate process, where it is dried, squeezed to remove more fat, and dried again. The resulting powder maybe found as an ingredient in pet foods. Many of the pet foods that are available for you buy use rendered meat by-products purchased from rendering plants. Next time you're in the store take a close look at the ingredients and note how many animal by-products you see listed. Fortunately, there are many superior pet food companies providing natural and organic ingredients or at least diets without animal by-products.

Pet loss is difficult. Discuss your pet's aftercare with your family ahead of time. Careful consideration of all your options is the best way to begin healing. If you do have to make this difficult decision, make sure that you specify which method of animal aftercare is right for you and your family. Veterinarians are dedicated to serving you and your animal companions in the best way possible and have devoted their lives to the human-animal bond. But your veterinarian needs to hear specifically from you on how best to comfort you during your time of need. This includes your aftercare decision. If you don't make specific arrangements for your beloved pet, unfortunately there's a good chance it will end up at that horrific rendering plant.

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