

Imagine Dealing With This Turmoil... by Michael Kubasak

Several funeral/cremation providers across the country are involved in horrendous lawsuits because of misidentification of decedents in their custody. As is always the case, various circumstances surround each lawsuit, but they all share one commonality: *disposing of the wrong decedent.*

Among other critical mistakes by these funeral/cremation providers, they failed by:

- Not having a policy in place to establish identity of the decedent at the time of transferring the remains into their custody
- Not checking all tags of identity on the decedent to make sure the names were the same
- Taking the word of a hospital employee that this is the correct person
- Not having the next of kin or their designated representative perform verification of the identity before disposition

It remains to be seen if all of them have adequate professional liability coverage to pay the damages and even if their insurance companies will pay. Regardless, each of them is facing another catastrophic loss that money cannot fix: *loss of reputation and community standing.*

You can learn from the deficiencies and misfortunes of your colleagues. The first, true identification system for funeral/cremation service is now available through Innovative Supply Inc, St. Paul, Minnesota. Their ***Universal Identification System*** is much more than “another” ID band – it incorporates a permanent ankle bracelet with a six-digit number embossed into it. This number is assigned to only one bracelet and it withstands the highest temperatures during cremation. The band is designed to be placed on the decedent at the time of transfer to your custody.

Every funeral home and crematory should immediately adopt using the **Universal Identification System**. It is a sure-fire way to help prevent misidentification...it will impress client families, hospice and hospital staff and provide you with peace of mind. Take my word for it...using this system will differentiate your company from the rest of your competition. Innovative Supply Inc can be reached by calling 800-890-0558 or via their Web site: www.innovativesupplyinc.com **Do it now.** This system is the best way to insure that you never bury, entomb, cremate or ship the wrong person.

To receive a free copy of my article that appeared in *Mortuary Management*, “Identification – A Central Part Of What We Do,” send me your name and mailing address.

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