

Senate File 2110 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 2110
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A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act relating to the natural organic reduction of human
- 2 remains.
- 3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 147.13, subsection 13, Code 2026, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 13. For mortuary science and natural organic reduction, the
4 board of mortuary science.

5 Sec. 2. Section 147.74, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
6 following new subsection:

7 NEW SUBSECTION. 29. A person licensed to operate a natural
8 organic reduction establishment pursuant to section 156A.2 may
9 use the title of "natural organic reduction facility" or "human
10 composting" when advertising the person's business.

11 Sec. 3. Section 156.2, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
12 following new subsection:

13 NEW SUBSECTION. 5. Persons providing natural organic
14 reduction services pursuant to chapter 156A.

15 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. **156A.1 Definitions.**

16 As used in this chapter unless context otherwise requires:

17 1. "Board" means the board of mortuary science.

18 2. "Natural organic reduction" means the contained,
19 accelerated conversion of human remains to soil.

20 3. "Natural organic reduction establishment" means a secure
21 structure, room, or other space where natural organic reduction
22 services are performed.

23 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. **156A.2 Natural organic reduction**
24 **establishment — license required.**

25 1. A person shall not operate a natural organic reduction
26 establishment without a license issued by the board.

27 2. A natural organic reduction establishment shall include
28 all of the following:

29 a. A building or structure that contains one or more aerobic
30 reduction vessels for the natural organic reduction of dead human
31 bodies.

32 b. A motorized mechanical device for the processing of
33 naturally reduced remains.

34 c. A refrigerated holding facility for dead human bodies
35 awaiting natural organic reduction, which shall be secure from

1 unauthorized personnel, preserve the dignity of the remains, and
2 protect the health and safety of the employees of the natural
3 organic reduction establishment.

4 3. To qualify for a natural organic reduction establishment
5 license, the applicant shall submit to the board a license fee
6 of four hundred twenty-five dollars and a completed application
7 on a form prescribed by the board that must include the following
8 information and be given under oath:

9 a. Proof of business form and ownership.

10 b. Proof of liability insurance coverage or other financial
11 documentation, as determined by the board by rule, that
12 demonstrates the applicant's ability to pay damages arising from
13 the ownership, maintenance, management, or operation of a natural
14 organic reduction establishment.

15 4. The board shall perform an initial inspection of a
16 proposed natural organic reduction establishment prior to issuing
17 a license for a natural organic reduction establishment.

18 5. A license issued pursuant to this section is
19 nontransferrable and is valid only for the location licensed. A
20 fifty percent or more change in ownership of a natural organic
21 reduction facility shall automatically terminate the license.
22 Separate licenses shall be required for each person if two or
23 more persons operate from the same location.

24 6. A licensee shall inform the board, on a form provided by
25 the board, of any changes to the information submitted with the
26 license application within thirty calendar days of the date of
27 the change.

28 7. a. A license issued pursuant to this section shall be
29 valid for a period of one year, beginning on July 1 and ending
30 on June 30, and may be renewed as provided by the board by rule.

31 b. The board shall impose a late filing fee of one hundred
32 dollars for an application for license renewal submitted not
33 later than thirty-one calendar days after the expiration date of
34 the license. A license not renewed within thirty-one calendar
35 days after expiration shall lapse.

1 8. The owner of a natural organic reduction establishment
2 shall ensure that unlicensed persons employed by the natural
3 organic reduction establishment comply with the requirements of
4 this chapter and rules adopted by the board. A licensee shall
5 provide training for all unlicensed employees.

6 9. a. A natural organic reduction establishment shall not
7 accept a dead human body for natural organic reduction unless the
8 body is all of the following:

9 (1) Enclosed in a container that is suitable for natural
10 organic reduction and is impermeable or leak-resistant.

11 (2) Accompanied by a written authorization in compliance with
12 section 156A.3, subsection 3, paragraph "a".

13 (3) Delivered by a funeral establishment licensed pursuant to
14 section 156.14.

15 b. A natural organic reduction establishment shall not accept
16 a dead human body for natural organic reduction if any of the
17 following apply:

18 (1) There is a known dispute regarding the natural organic
19 reduction of the body.

20 (2) There is a reasonable basis for questioning a
21 representation made on the written authorization completed
22 pursuant to section 156A.3, subsection 3, paragraph "a".

23 c. If a dead human body is delivered by a funeral
24 establishment to a natural organic reduction establishment in
25 a container that is not suitable for natural organic reduction
26 or that shows signs of leaking, the dead human body shall
27 be returned to the funeral establishment or transferred to a
28 suitable container by a funeral director licensed pursuant to
29 section 156.4.

30 10. A dead human body shall not be removed from a container
31 in which it was delivered to a natural organic reduction
32 establishment except by a funeral director licensed pursuant to
33 section 156.4 and with the express written authorization of the
34 decedent's designee pursuant to section 144C.3, or a person with
35 authority to control pursuant to section 144C.5.

1 11. A natural organic reduction establishment shall place
2 a dead human body in an aerobic reduction vessel within a
3 reasonable time after death.

4 12. A natural organic reduction establishment shall develop,
5 implement, and maintain a system to identify dead human bodies
6 from the time the natural organic reduction establishment accepts
7 delivery of a dead human body to the time naturally organically
8 reduced remains are released to an authorized party.

9 13. Except as otherwise provided by an express written
10 authorization of the decedent's designee pursuant to section
11 144C.3, or person with authority to control pursuant to section
12 144C.5, a natural organic reduction facility shall not conduct
13 natural organic reduction in the presence of a person other than
14 authorized personnel of the natural organic reduction facility.

15 14. Except as otherwise provided by an express written
16 authorization of the decedent's designee pursuant to section
17 144C.3, or person with authority to control pursuant to section
18 144C.5, dead human bodies and naturally organically reduced
19 human remains shall not be commingled with any other dead human
20 body or naturally organically reduced human remains. A natural
21 organic reduction facility shall take all reasonable efforts to
22 completely remove and dispose of naturally organically reduced
23 human remains from the aerobic reduction vessel and any other
24 location where naturally organically reduced human remains are
25 stored.

26 15. A natural organic reduction establishment shall dispose
27 of naturally organically reduced remains and nonnaturally reduced
28 items and materials as provided in the written authorization
29 issued pursuant to section 156A.3, subsection 3, paragraph "a",
30 or as otherwise provided by law or rule adopted by the board.
31 If naturally organically reduced remains are shipped, the remains
32 shall be transported by a method that includes a tracking system
33 and provides a receipt signed by the person accepting delivery.

34 16. If naturally organically reduced human remains are
35 unclaimed after thirty days following the completion of natural

1 organic reduction, the natural organic reduction establishment
2 shall give written notice by certified mail to the designee
3 pursuant to section 144C.3, or person with authority to control
4 pursuant to section 144C.5, to request further instructions.
5 If naturally organically reduced human remains are unclaimed
6 one hundred twenty days after the mailing of written notice,
7 the natural organic reduction establishment shall respectfully
8 dispose of the naturally organically reduced remains in any
9 lawful manner.

10 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. **156A.3 Natural organic reduction —**
11 **requirements.**

12 1. A dead human body shall only undergo natural organic
13 reduction at a natural organic reduction establishment licensed
14 pursuant to section 156A.2.

15 2. Natural organic reduction shall only be conducted using an
16 aerobic reduction vessel approved by the board by rule, and that
17 is designed to promote aerobic reduction to minimize odor.

18 3. a. Natural organic reduction shall only be conducted with
19 the written authorization of the designee pursuant to section
20 144C.3, or person with authority to control pursuant to section
21 144C.5. The written authorization must include all of the
22 following:

23 (1) The name and date of death of the deceased.

24 (2) A statement authorizing the natural organic reduction
25 facility to naturally organically reduce the dead human body.

26 (3) The name, address, phone number, relationship to the
27 deceased, and signature of the designee or person with authority
28 to control.

29 (4) Directions for the disposition of any nonnaturally
30 organically reduced materials or items recovered from the aerobic
31 reduction vessel.

32 (5) Acknowledgment that some of the naturally organically
33 reduced remains will be mechanically reduced to a granulated
34 appearance and included in the containers with the naturally
35 organically reduced remains.

1 (6) Directions for the ultimate disposition of the naturally
2 organically reduced remains.

3 b. A natural organic reduction establishment that reasonably
4 relies in good faith on written authorization issued pursuant
5 to paragraph "a" and otherwise complies with the law shall be
6 held harmless from civil liability and criminal prosecution for
7 actions taken by the natural organic reduction facility.

8 4. Naturally organically reduced remains shall be cured
9 appropriately following natural organic reduction, and any
10 fragments larger than one centimeter shall be reduced by
11 a motorized mechanical device to a granulated appearance
12 appropriate for final disposition and placed with the naturally
13 organically reduced remains.

14 Sec. 7. NEW SECTION. **156A.4 Natural organic reduction**
15 **establishment — records required.**

16 1. Each natural organic reduction establishment shall
17 maintain a record of each natural organic reduction performed
18 by the establishment. The record shall include all of the
19 following:

20 a. The name of the funeral establishment delivering the dead
21 human body for natural organic reduction.

22 b. The name of the deceased and the identification number
23 assigned to the dead human body.

24 c. The date of acceptance of delivery.

25 d. The name of the operator of the natural organic reduction
26 process and of the mechanical processor operator.

27 e. The times and dates that the dead human body was placed in
28 and removed from the aerobic reduction vessel.

29 f. The time and date that processing and inurnment of the
30 naturally organically reduced remains was completed.

31 g. The time, date, and manner of release of the naturally
32 organically reduced remains.

33 h. The name and address of the person who signed the
34 authorization pursuant to section 156A.3, subsection 3.

35 i. All supporting documentation, including transit or

1 disposition permits, a photocopy of the death record and the
2 authorization pursuant to section 156A.3, subsection 3.

3 j. The type of aerobic reduction vessel used.

4 2. A natural organic reduction establishment shall retain
5 records described in subsection 1 for a period of ten years
6 following the date of release of naturally organically reduced
7 remains.

8 Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. **156A.5 Rules.**

9 The board shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to
10 implement this chapter.

11 EXPLANATION

12 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
13 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

14 This bill relates to the natural organic reduction of
15 human remains. The bill allows a licensed organic reduction
16 establishment (establishment) to perform natural organic
17 reduction of human remains, defined in the bill as the contained,
18 accelerated conversion of human remains to soil.

19 An establishment shall include a building or structure
20 containing one or more aerobic reduction vessels, a motorized
21 mechanical device for the processing of naturally reduced
22 remains, and a refrigerated holding facility for the storage
23 of dead human bodies. To obtain a natural organic reduction
24 facility license, the bill requires an applicant to submit
25 an application to the board of mortuary science (board), an
26 application fee of \$425, proof of business ownership, and proof
27 of liability insurance or evidence of ability to pay damages
28 related to the operation of the establishment. The bill also
29 requires the board to perform an initial inspection of the
30 establishment prior to issuing a license. All licenses are
31 nontransferrable, valid from July 1 through June 30, and may be
32 renewed. The bill requires the board to impose a late filing
33 fee of \$100 on a renewal application submitted up to 31 days
34 after the expiration date of the license. A license that is not
35 renewed within 31 days after expiration shall lapse.

1 The bill allows an establishment to employ unlicensed persons
2 but requires the owner of the establishment to provide training
3 for the unlicensed employees and ensure that they comply with
4 relevant laws and rules of the board.

5 The bill allows an establishment to accept remains for
6 natural organic reduction only if the remains are enclosed
7 in a container that is suitable for natural organic reduction
8 and impermeable or leak-proof, delivered by a licensed funeral
9 establishment, and accompanied by a written authorization from
10 a person with authority to direct the final disposition of the
11 remains. The written authorization must include the name and
12 date of death of the deceased, a statement authorizing natural
13 organic reduction, the name, address, phone number, relationship
14 to the deceased, and signature of the person who signed the
15 written authorization, directions for the disposition of any
16 nonnaturally organically reduced materials or items recovered
17 from the natural organic reduction vessel, acknowledgment that
18 some of the naturally organically reduced remains will be
19 mechanically reduced to a granulated appearance, and directions
20 for the ultimate disposition of the naturally organically reduced
21 remains.

22 The bill prohibits an establishment from accepting a body
23 for natural organic reduction if there is a known dispute
24 regarding the natural organic reduction of the remains or if
25 there is a reasonable basis for questioning a representation
26 made on the written authorization to naturally organically
27 reduce. If remains are delivered in a container that is not
28 suitable for natural organic reduction or that shows signs of
29 leaking, the bill requires the remains to be returned to the
30 funeral establishment or transferred to a suitable container
31 by a licensed funeral director. The bill only allows remains
32 to be removed from the container in which it was delivered
33 by a licensed funeral director and with the express written
34 authorization of the person with authority to direct the final
35 disposition of the remains.

1 The bill requires an establishment to begin natural organic
2 reduction within a reasonable time after death and to implement
3 an identification and tracking system for dead human bodies and
4 naturally organically reduced remains. The bill also requires
5 natural organic reduction to be conducted privately and prohibits
6 the commingling of dead human bodies and naturally organically
7 reduced human remains. If naturally organically reduced human
8 remains are unclaimed after 30 days following completion of
9 natural organic reduction, the bill requires the establishment
10 to give written notice by certified mail to the person with
11 authority to direct the final disposition of the remains. If
12 naturally organically reduced remains are unclaimed 120 days
13 following the mailing of written notice, the bill allows the
14 establishment to dispose of the remains in a respectful and
15 lawful manner.

16 The bill requires natural organic reduction to be performed
17 using an aerobic reduction vessel approved by the board, and
18 that is designed to promote aerobic reduction and minimize
19 odor. Following natural organic reduction, the bill requires the
20 remains to be cured appropriately and any fragments larger than
21 one centimeter to be reduced by a motorized mechanical device to
22 a granulated appearance appropriate for final disposition.

23 The bill requires an establishment to maintain a record of
24 each natural organic reduction performed by the establishment.
25 The records shall include the name of the funeral establishment
26 delivering the body for natural organic reduction; the name of
27 the deceased and the identification number assigned to the body;
28 the date of acceptance of delivery; the names of the operator
29 of the natural organic reduction process and mechanical processor
30 operator; the times and dates that the body was placed in and
31 removed from the aerobic reduction vessel; the time and date that
32 processing and inurnment of the naturally organically reduced
33 remains was completed, time, date, and manner of release of
34 the naturally organically reduced remains; the name and address
35 of the person who signed the authorization for natural organic

1 reduction; all supporting documentation, including transit or
2 disposition permits, a photocopy of the death record, and
3 the authorization for natural organic reduction; and the type
4 of aerobic reduction vessel used. The bill requires an
5 establishment to retain records for 10 years.

6 The bill requires the board to adopt rules to implement the
7 bill.

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