



**NEWS** FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MISSOURI ATTORNEY GENERAL

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July 27, 2010

## Consumer Alert

Mount Washington Forever Funeral Home, Barreto Family Funeral Home, and the Forever Cremation Society of Kansas City, all located in Independence, Missouri, have closed. Mount Washington Forever Cemetery remains open, but is being operated by a new company.

The Missouri Attorney General's Office provides the following information to consumers related to the closure of these funeral homes and preneed funeral plans purchased through these facilities:

- All consumers who purchased a preneed funeral plan from any of these funeral homes will need to make new arrangements for prepaid funerals and for future funerals at another funeral home of your choice. The new funeral home will be able to assist you with determining your options.
- If you are still making payments on a preneed or prepaid funeral plan you purchased through Mount Washington Forever Funeral Home, the Forever Cremation Society of Kansas City or the Barreto Family funeral home, you should stop making payments.
- Review your prepaid funeral plan contract. If your contract is through National Prearranged Services (NPS), then you need to contact the court-appointed receiver, who was requested by the Texas Department of Insurance and is currently overseeing the liquidation of the company pursuant to the orders of the Texas Courts. You can contact the receiver by calling 1-800-334-3851, or go to <http://www.lincolnmemorallife.com>, to find out how to check on the status of your preneed contract. Contact the receivership before making any additional payments on your prepaid funeral contract. The Receiver will provide more information on your situation.
- If you have been making payments on your NPS preneed contract since May, 2008, you may not receive credit for those payments. The company controlling Mount Washington did not keep the money collected in a trust, and, those payments made directly to Mount Washington or its related companies since May 2008 were not forwarded to the NPS Receiver and so the Receiver cannot credit your account for those payments. Unfortunately, there is little recourse for such consumers at this time. However,

consumers in this situation are encouraged to file a complaint with the Missouri Attorney General's Office at 1-800-392-8222.

- If your preneed contract does not show it is through National Prearranged Services, and you have been making payments on your preneed contract directly to Mount Washington or its related companies since May 2008, the receiver will not be able to help you. Your funeral home will be able to help you ascertain any value for your preneed contract.
- Any cemetery lots or mausoleum spaces purchased in Mount Washington Forever Cemetery should not be in jeopardy. However, you should contact the cemetery to confirm. If you are still making payments on a cemetery plot or space in a mausoleum, you should contact the cemetery about continuing those payments.

The Missouri Attorney General's Office is working very closely with the Receiver in Texas and with federal authorities investigating this matter to protect Missouri consumers. The court-appointed receiver has filed a legal action in federal court in St. Louis seeking to collect on the money that NPS and Mount Washington and its related companies failed to place into trust. The Attorney General's Office also has actions pending against these funeral homes.

Consumers who have been affected by the closure of these funeral homes should file a complaint with the Office of the Attorney General by calling 1-800-392-8222 or by going to the Attorney General's website at *ago.mo.gov* to ensure they are on record.

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