

This Sheet was a handout at a Gravestone Cleaning Workshop presented in Waterford in September 2000 by the Connecticut Gravestone Network. It should provide some basic guidance for making sure you do NOT use abrasives or damaging soaps while cleaning a family headstone.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS NEEDED FOR GRAVESTONE CLEANING PROJECTS

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STONE TYPES:

- **Marble/limestone**
 1. Water
 2. Non-ionic detergent (Photoflo – Kodak)
 3. Household ammonia
 4. Calcium hypochlorate (for biological growth) – HTH (available from swim pool suppliers)

- **Slate and Other Stone**
 1. Water
 2. Non-ionic detergent and water

CLEANING NO-NO's

1. Wire brushes, metal instruments, abrasive pads (Scotchbrite, Brillo, Steel wool)
2. Acid or acidic cleaners (especially on marble/limestone!)
3. Household cleaners: soap (Ivory), detergents (liquid or powder), Borax, Clorox, TSP, Calgon, Fantastik, Formula 409, Spic and Span (and other abrasive cleaners)

Remember: The use of improper cleaning materials and practices can cause serious and irreparable damage to gravestones! Make sure the stone is stable before attempting to clean it – no flaking, delaminating, etc.

POULTICE – SOFTENING

Kaolin
Glycerine (Use 50/50 mixture with water)
Water
Saran Wrap and heavy plastic for wrapping
Tape/String to secure plastic
Scrapers – plastic and wood

CLEANING

Good water supply
Non-ionic detergent 1 oz./5 gals. Water
e.g. Photoflo (Kodak)
Ammonia – 1 cup/1 gal. Water (marble)
Calcium Hypochlorite – (HTH) (marble) 2 oz./1 gal. Water
Assortment of Brushes (NOT WIRE) (Varying stiffnesses)
Sponges, tooth brushes
Scrapers – plastic or wood