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Burials are so expensive that people "can't afford to die"

Local Source: [Guangzhou Daily](#) April 7, 2015

During this year's Tomb Sweeping Festival, Guangzhou Department of Civil Affairs officials reminded people that financial speculation on cemetery burial plots is considered an illicit activity.



Lately in China, a popular saying is that one "can't afford to die." This is because not only are burials sites increasingly rare, but speculation on these sites has further raised the price to the point that the average family has trouble affording to rest a loved one in peace.

Increases in speculative investments led to the implementation of measures in 2004 and 2007 by the Guangzhou Department of Civil Affairs to curb such behavior. Anyone purchasing a burial site is now required to provide the "three cards": A death certificate, cremation certificate, and a tomb relocation certificate. Loopholes are still occasionally found.

Guangzhou officials are offering subsidies for the burial of ashes at sea and are promoting "eco-burials" in which ashes are buried in easily-decomposable ways to fertilize gardens, flowerbeds and forests. However, many people complain that these methods are "shabby." But officials are optimistic that perceptions will slowly shift as people see the benefits to the public.

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