

Subject Authorizing natural organic reduction

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Overview

The commissioner of health regulates the practice of mortuary science and enforces requirements for burial, cremation, and alkaline hydrolysis of human bodies. This bill adds natural organic reduction as a method for disposition for human bodies and authorizes the commissioner of health to regulate natural organic reduction facilities. In natural organic reduction, human remains are placed in an enclosed vessel with other organic materials and held for a period of time until the remains break down into soil. The remains are then processed, cured, and placed in a container for final disposition.

Summary

Section	Description
1	Arrangements for disposition. Amends § 149A.02, subd. 3. Effective July 1, 2025, amends the definition of arrangements for disposition to include disposition by natural organic reduction.
2	Final disposition. Amends § 149A.02, subd. 16. Effective July 1, 2025, amends the definition of final disposition to include disposition by means of natural organic reduction.
3	Inurnment. Amends § 149A.02, subd. 26a. Effective July 1, 2025, amends the definition of inurnment to include placing naturally reduced remains in a suitable container for placement, burial, or shipment.
4	Licensee. Amends § 149A.02, subd. 17. Effective July 1, 2025, amends the definition of licensee to include a person or entity with a license from the commissioner of health to operate a natural organic reduction facility.

Section	Description
5	<p>Natural organic reduction or naturally reduce.</p> <p>Adds subd. 30b to § 149A.02. Defines natural organic reduction or naturally reduce as the contained accelerated conversion of a dead human body to soil. This subdivision is effective July 1, 2025.</p>
6	<p>Natural organic reduction facility.</p> <p>Adds subd. 30c to § 149A.02. Defines natural organic reduction facility as a structure or space in a building or real property where natural organic reduction occurs. This subdivision is effective July 1, 2025.</p>
7	<p>Natural organic reduction vessel.</p> <p>Adds subd. 30d to § 149A.02. Defines natural organic reduction vessel as an enclosed container in which natural organic reduction takes place. This subdivision is effective July 1, 2025.</p>
8	<p>Naturally reduced remains.</p> <p>Adds subd. 30e to § 149A.02. Defines naturally reduced remains as the soil remains after the natural organic reduction of a dead human body, and accompanying plant material. This subdivision is effective July 1, 2025.</p>
9	<p>Naturally reduced remains container.</p> <p>Adds subd. 30f to § 149A.02. Defines naturally reduced remains container as a container in which naturally reduced remains are placed. This subdivision is effective July 1, 2025.</p>
10	<p>Processing.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.02, subd. 35. Effective July 1, 2025, amends the definition of processing to include reducing naturally reduced remains by mechanical means to a granulated appearance appropriate for final disposition.</p>
11	<p>Scattering.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.02, subd. 37c. Effective July 1, 2025, amends the definition of scattering to include the authorized dispersal of naturally reduced remains in a defined area of a dedicated cemetery or area where no local prohibition exists.</p>
12	<p>Duties of commissioner.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.03. Amends the duties of the commissioner of health related to mortuary science and the disposition of human bodies, to include enforcing laws and adopting rules on the licensing and operation of natural organic reduction facilities. This amendment is effective July 1, 2025.</p>

Section	Description
13	<p>License to operate a natural organic reduction facility.</p> <p>Adds § 149A.56. Requires a natural organic reduction facility to be licensed by the commissioner of health in order to operate, and establishes requirements for natural organic reduction facilities. This section is effective July 1, 2025.</p> <p>Subd. 1. License required. Prohibits a person from operating a place to perform natural organic reduction of dead human bodies without possessing a license to operate a natural organic reduction facility issued by the commissioner of health.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Requirements for natural organic reduction facility. Requires a natural organic reduction facility to consist of a building that contains one or more natural organic reduction vessels; a motorized mechanical device to process naturally reduced remains; and a refrigerated holding facility for dead human bodies awaiting natural organic reduction. Allows a facility to contain a display room for funeral goods.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Application procedure; documentation; initial inspection. Requires an applicant for a license to operate a natural organic reduction facility to apply to the commissioner and specifies what a completed application must include. Upon receipt of the application and fee, requires the commissioner to review and verify information, conduct an initial inspection, grant or deny licensure, and notify the applicant. Requires notice to the applicant to be in writing if the application is denied.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Nontransferability of license. Provides a license to operate a natural organic reduction facility is not transferable, and that a license is only valid for the location listed on the license. Provides a 50 percent or more change in ownership or location automatically terminates the license.</p> <p>Subd. 5. Display of license. Requires a license to operate a natural organic reduction facility to be conspicuously displayed on the premises at all times.</p> <p>Subd. 6. Period of licensure. Provides a license to operate a natural organic reduction facility is valid from July 1 to June 30.</p> <p>Subd. 7. Reporting changes in license information. Requires changes in license information to be reported to the commissioner within 30 days after the change, and provides failure to report the change is grounds for disciplinary action.</p> <p>Subd. 8. Application information. Classifies application information submitted to the commissioner for a license to operate a natural organic reduction facility as licensing data.</p>

Section	Description
14	<p>Renewal of license to operate a natural organic reduction facility.</p> <p>Adds § 149A.57. Establishes requirements for renewal of a license for a natural organic reduction facility. This section is effective July 1, 2025.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Renewal required. Makes natural organic reduction facility licenses expire on June 30, and requires licenses to be renewed to remain valid.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Renewal procedure and documentation. Requires a licensee who wants to renew a license to submit a completed renewal application by June 30 following the date of licensure, and specifies what a completed renewal application must include. Upon receipt of the completed renewal application, requires the commissioner to review and verify the information, make a determination to renew or not renew the license, and notify the applicant for renewal of the determination. If the determination is to not renew the license, requires the notification to be in writing and allows a hearing to be requested.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Penalty for late filing. Provides renewal applications received after a license expires will result in assessment of a late fee, and requires the late fee to be paid within 31 days after the license expires for the license to be reissued.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Lapse of license. Provides a license to operate a natural organic reduction facility lapses if the renewal application and late fee are not submitted to the commissioner within 31 days after the license expires.</p> <p>Subd. 5. Effect of lapse of license. When a license lapses, provides the person to whom the license was issued is no longer licensed to operate a natural organic reduction facility, and requires the commissioner to issue a cease and desist order to prevent the person from operating a natural organic reduction facility.</p> <p>Subd. 6. Restoration of lapsed license. Allows the commissioner to restore a lapsed license upon receiving and reviewing a completed application, receiving the late filing penalty, and reinspecting the premises, as long as the application is received within one year of the lapse and a cease and desist order has not been violated.</p> <p>Subd. 7. Reporting changes in license information. Requires changes of license information to be reported to the commissioner within 30 days after the change occurs, and makes failure to report a change a ground for disciplinary action.</p> <p>Subd. 8. Application information. Classifies information submitted to the commissioner on a renewal application as licensing data.</p>

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15	<p>Natural organic reduction facilities.</p> <p>Adds subd. 6a to § 149A.65. Sets the initial and renewal fees to license a natural organic reduction facility at \$425, and the late fee charge for license renewal at \$100. This subdivision is effective July 1, 2025.</p>
16	<p>Use of titles.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.70, subd. 1. Effective July 1, 2025, provides that only a person with a natural organic reduction facility license may use the title natural organic reduction facility, human composting, or any other title or term implying the person operates a natural organic reduction facility.</p>
17	<p>Business location.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.70, subd. 2. Effective July 1, 2025, prohibits a natural organic reduction facility from doing business at a location that is not licensed as a natural organic reduction facility.</p>
18	<p>Advertising.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.70, subd. 3. Adds certain acts related to performing natural organic reductions to the list of acts that constitute false, misleading, or deceptive advertising and are prohibited under this subdivision. These amendments are effective July 1, 2025.</p>
19	<p>Reimbursement prohibited.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.70, subd. 5. Effective July 1, 2025, prohibits a licensee, student, or intern from offering, asking for, or accepting a fee or other reimbursement for recommending or causing a body to be disposed of by a specific natural organic reduction facility.</p>
20	<p>Preventive requirements.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.71, subd. 2. Adds naturally reduced remains containers to the list of funeral goods for which funeral providers must have a separate price list. Requires a funeral provider's general price list to have separate prices for each natural organic reduction, each shroud, and any natural organic reduction facility charges, and to have either the price range for shrouds and naturally reduced remains containers offered by the funeral establishment or the prices of individual containers offered by the funeral establishment. These amendments are effective July 1, 2025.</p>

Section	Description
21	<p>Casket, alternative container, alkaline hydrolysis container, naturally reduced remains container, and cremation container sales; records; required disclosures.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.71, subd. 4. Effective July 1, 2025, requires a funeral provider who sells or offers for sale a naturally reduced remains container to maintain a record of each sale, and requires the record to contain the listed information.</p>
22	<p>Casket for alkaline hydrolysis, natural organic reduction, or cremation provisions; deceptive acts or practices.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.72, subd. 3. Effective July 1, 2025, provides it is a deceptive act or practice for a funeral provider to represent that a casket is required under state or federal law for natural organic reductions.</p>
23	<p>Deceptive acts or practices.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.72, subd. 9. Effective July 1, 2025, provides it is a deceptive act or practice for a funeral provider to represent that natural organic reduction facilities require the purchase of any funeral goods or services or burial site goods or services when such a purchase is not required by natural organic reduction facilities.</p>
24	<p>Casket for alkaline hydrolysis, natural organic reduction, or cremation provisions; deceptive acts or practices.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.73, subd. 1. Effective July 1, 2025, provides it is a deceptive act or practice for a funeral provider to require a casket to be purchased for natural organic reduction.</p>
25	<p>Services provided without prior approval; deceptive acts or practices.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.74, subd. 1. Effective July 1, 2025, requires a funeral provider, in seeking permission to embalm a body, to disclose that no embalming fee will be charged if the family selects disposition by natural organic reduction.</p>
26	<p>Disposition permit.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.93, subd. 3. Effective July 1, 2025, adds natural organic reduction to the types of disposition for which a disposition permit is required.</p>
27	<p>Generally.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.94, subd. 1. Adds natural organic reduction to the types of disposition that must be performed within a reasonable time after death. If natural organic reduction will not be initiated within 72 hours after death or release of the body, requires the body to be embalmed, refrigerated, or packed in dry ice. These amendments are effective July 1, 2025.</p>

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28	<p>Permit required.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.94, subd. 3. Adds alkaline hydrolysis and, effective July 1, 2025, natural organic reduction to the types of disposition of a dead human body for which a disposition permit is required.</p>
29	<p>Alkaline hydrolysis, natural organic reduction, or cremation.</p> <p>Amends § 149A.94, subd. 4. Effective July 1, 2025, provides that inurnment of naturally reduced remains and release to an appropriate party is considered final disposition, and no further permits or authorizations are required for transportation, interment, or placement.</p>
30	<p>Natural organic reduction facilities and natural organic reduction.</p> <p>Adds § 149A.955. Establishes requirements for the performance of natural organic reductions. This section is effective July 1, 2025.</p> <p>Subd. 1. License required. Provides a dead human body may undergo natural organic reduction only at a licensed natural organic reduction facility.</p> <p>Subd. 2. General requirements. Requires a building used as a natural organic reduction facility to comply with building codes, zoning laws, and environmental standards; have a natural organic reduction system approved by the commissioner; a motorized mechanical device for processing naturally reduced remains; and a refrigerated holding facility accessible only by authorized personnel.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Aerobic reduction vessel. Requires the natural organic reduction vessel to be a contained reduction vessel designed to promote aerobic reduction and minimize odors.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Unlicensed personnel. Allows a natural organic reduction facility to employ unlicensed personnel, requires the facility to provide unlicensed personnel with proper training, and makes the facility liable for compliance with this chapter and occupational health and safety laws.</p> <p>Subd. 5. Authorization to naturally reduce. Prohibits a natural organic reduction facility from naturally reducing a dead human body or identifiable body part without written authorization to do so, and specifies what the written authorization must include.</p> <p>Subd. 6. Limitation of liability. Refers to limitation of liability language that applies to crematories to make a natural organic reduction facility immune from civil liability or criminal prosecution for actions it takes, if acting in good faith,</p>

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with reasonable reliance on an authorization to naturally reduce, according to an authorization to naturally reduce, and in an otherwise lawful manner.

Subd. 7. Acceptance of delivery of body. To be accepted for final disposition by natural organic reduction, requires the body to be wrapped in an impermeable, leak-resistant container; be accompanied by a disposition permit; and be accompanied by a natural organic reduction authorization. Lists circumstances in which a natural organic reduction facility must not accept delivery of a dead human body. Requires a body to be transferred to a new container or returned to the contracting funeral establishment if the current container shows evidence of leakage. If the body is delivered in a container not suitable to be placed in a natural organic reduction vessel, requires the transfer to the vessel to be performed by a properly license individual.

Subd. 8. Bodies awaiting natural organic reduction. Requires a body to be placed in a natural organic reduction vessel to begin natural organic reduction within a reasonable time after death.

Subd. 9. Handling of dead human bodies. Requires facility employees handling containers holding dead human bodies to use universal precautions and use reasonable precautions to minimize the risk of transmitting a communicable disease from the body. Prohibits a body from being removed from the container in which it is delivered to the facility without authorization from the person who controls disposition, and requires removal to be performed by a properly licensed individual. Allows a person with the right to control disposition of the body to be involved with preparation of the body.

Subd. 10. Identification of the body. Requires a natural organic reduction facility to maintain identification procedures to identify dead human bodies from the time the facility accepts delivery of the body until the naturally reduced remains are released to an authorized party.

Subd. 11. Natural organic reduction vessel for human remains. Requires a natural organic reduction facility to naturally reduce only dead human bodies or human remains in a natural organic reduction vessel.

Subd. 12. Natural organic reduction procedures; privacy. Requires final disposition of dead human bodies by natural organic reduction to be performed in privacy, and only allows authorized personnel to be in the natural organic reduction area unless there is written authorization from the person who controls final disposition that others may be present. Provides this does not prohibit a laying-in ceremony.

Section	Description
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Subd. 13. Natural organic reduction procedures; commingling of bodies prohibited. Except with express permission of the person with the right to control final disposition of the body, prohibits a natural organic reduction facility from commingling multiple bodies in the same natural organic reduction vessel. Provides incidental residue remaining in the vessel does not violate this subdivision.

Subd. 14. Natural organic reduction procedures; removal from natural organic reduction vessel. Requires reasonable efforts to be made to remove all recoverable remains from a natural organic reduction vessel when the process is complete. Requires materials that cannot be naturally reduced to be separated from the naturally reduced remains and disposed of by the facility.

Subd. 15. Natural organic reduction procedures; commingling of naturally reduced remains prohibited. Except with express permission of the person with the right to control final disposition of the body, prohibits a natural organic reduction facility from commingling naturally reduced remains of more than one body at a time in the mechanical processor. Provides incidental residue remaining in the processor does not violate this subdivision.

Subd. 16. Natural organic reduction procedures; processing naturally reduced remains. Requires larger fragments to be prepared, including by using a motorized mechanical processor, and requires the naturally reduced remains to be cured appropriately.

Subd. 17. Natural organic reduction procedures; use of more than one naturally reduced remains container. If naturally reduced remains are placed in two or more containers, requires all containers to contain duplicate identification tags or labels, and requires paperwork to indicate the number and disposition of each container.

Subd. 18. Natural organic reduction procedures; disposition of accumulated residue. Requires residue in the natural organic reduction vessel, mechanical processor, and other equipment to be disposed of by any lawful manner deemed appropriate.

Subd. 19. Natural organic reduction procedures; release of naturally reduced remains. After natural organic reduction, requires the remains to be released according to instructions on the authorization for natural organic reduction. Establishes requirements when the remains are to be shipped, and when there is a dispute over the release or disposition of the remains.

Section **Description**

Subd. 20. Unclaimed naturally reduced remains. Establishes procedures for the facility to follow if the naturally reduced remains are unclaimed.

Subd. 21. Required records. Requires a natural organic reduction facility to maintain a record of each natural organic reduction performed, and lists what the record must contain.

Subd. 22. Retention of records. Requires records on natural organic reductions to be maintained for three years after release of the remains, after which they may be placed in storage or reduced to another format for ten years after release of the remains. After ten years, the records may be destroyed.



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