

**§ 160A-344. Authority to assume control of abandoned cemeteries.**

(a) Whenever property not under the control or in the possession of any church or religious organization in any city has been heretofore set aside or used for cemetery purposes, and the trustees or owners named in the deed or deeds for the property have died, or are unknown, or the deeds of conveyance have been lost or misplaced and no record of title thereto has been found, and the property has been occupied and used for burial purposes for a time sufficient to identify its use as cemetery property, the city in which the cemetery is located is authorized to take possession of the land and any adjoining land not held by known claimants of title, have the property surveyed and lines established, and to designate and appropriate the property as a city cemetery.

(b) The city may have the land subdivided and laid off into family burial plots, may sell any of the unused lots so laid off to any person for burial purposes, and may use the proceeds of the sale for the improvement and upkeep of the cemetery.

(c) The city may appropriate and use funds for the improvement and maintenance of the cemetery, and all laws and ordinances applicable to city cemeteries shall apply to the cemetery from and after the date that the city assumes control of it. (1971, c. 698, s. 1.)