

# FUNERAL SERVICES



A funeral co-op is an association of individuals who have come together to meet their needs for funeral services. These co-operatives aim to serve mourning families, regardless of their budgets and cultural backgrounds. Distinguished by their human approach, funeral co-operatives seek to satisfy members and non-members in a spirit of solidarity, support and integrity.

Although funeral co-ops have existed in Canada for many years, their numbers increased remarkably in the 1990s, especially in Québec. Around this time, multinationals attempted to take over the market by buying out almost all family-run funeral parlors. In reaction, the Québec co-op and mutualist movement encouraged local funeral service providers to convert their private businesses to community-owned co-operatives as a way to halt this centralization.

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## The power of funeral co-operatives

The first funeral co-op was founded in 1942 in Château-Richer, outside Québec City. Today, there are over 50 funeral co-operatives in Canada. Funeral co-ops as a whole are this industry's largest in the province of Québec when it comes to service points. Co-ops hold an overall 15% market share, with shares rising beyond 50% in some locations (for example, nearly 80% in Gatineau, QC). Assets reach more than \$150 million dollars.

The co-operative funeral movement is growing. Over 9,600 ceremonies were performed by funeral co-operatives in 2011 in Canada, which is 5% more than in 2009. The network is made up of 30 funeral co-operatives in Québec and 21 in the other Canadian provinces.

Co-operatives offer consumers several advantages, including **lower prices**. The average cost of a funeral in Canada was \$6,235 in 2004, whereas funeral co-ops charged an average \$3,677 for a ceremony.



## IN NUMBERS<sup>1</sup>

**59**  
FUNERAL  
CO-OPERATIVES

.....

**\$166 million**  
IN ASSETS<sup>1</sup>

.....

**170,000**  
MEMBERS<sup>1</sup>

.....

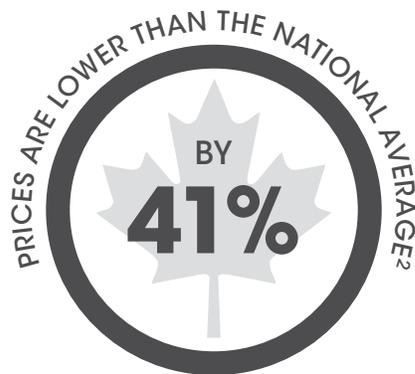
**\$37 million**  
IN SALES<sup>1</sup>

.....

OVER  
**800**  
EMPLOYEES<sup>1</sup>

## Our member in this sector

**Fédération des coopératives funéraires du québec.** The federation now includes 25 member co-operatives across Québec. These co-operatives manage 90% of the funerals performed by all Québec funeral co-ops. The federation also includes 10 co-operatives in other Canadian provinces, one in the United States and one in Peru.



<sup>1</sup> MDEIE, 2013    <sup>2</sup> Fédération des coopératives funéraires du Québec, 2012