



A guide for What to Expect

Be prepared for your reef casting, viewing and dedication



The Casting



Families and friends are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in the casting of their loved ones Eternal Reef.

Many castings are performed at our facility, Reef Innovations, located in Sarasota, Florida. Many others are performed near the location where they are placed in the sea. The process includes mixing your loved ones remains into an environmentally safe concrete reef mixture to create their Memorial Reef. The casting is an outdoor construction process so *please dress appropriately, and for your safety, do not wear open toe shoes, sandals or heels.*

Before the casting begins, we will give everyone an overview of how the process will unfold and explain everyone's role during the casting.

For family and friends that cannot attend the casting or who do not feel comfortable participating, Eternal Reefs staff will perform all aspects of the Memorial Reef casting.

The Handprints and Personal Messages

Family and friends are given the opportunity to put handprints and written messages in the damp concrete reef mixture. Many loved ones feel this is a wonderful way to stay in touch for eternity.



After the Casting

The following day, Eternal Reefs will remove the Memorial Reefs from the molds and allow them to cure.

The Viewing

The day before the scheduled Memorial Reef dedication, family and friends are invited to view their loved ones Eternal Reef. The viewing is an opportunity to see and touch the Memorial Reef, take photos, make rubbings of the bronze plaque and write final goodbyes and tributes both on and inside the memorials.

At the viewing, Eternal Reefs will provide rubbing wax and paper for the bronze plaque rubbings, and chalk for writing messages.



We suggest dressing comfortably for the forecasted weather.

Military Service Honors

Eternal Reefs will arrange for honors to be presented the day of the viewing for eligible service men and women. Military honors can only be presented to each service person one time. To determine eligibility, Eternal Reefs must receive a legible copy of the deceased's DD-214 discharge papers before the time the Memorial Reef is cast. This will give us the opportunity to work with the Veterans Administration to arrange the honors.

Honors will be presented during the Memorial Reef viewing ceremony. Flags will be folded onto the Memorial Reefs and the family will be given time with the memorial. The Honor Guard will then perform their ceremony, including folding of the flag, and present it to the appointed family member.



The Dedication

On the day of your loved one's memorial reef dedication, we ask family and friends to arrive at the selected chartered boat dock by 7:30 AM. The family boat leaves promptly at 8:00 AM. All family members and friends ride on the family boat to the reef site where we meet the boat that transports and places the Memorial Reefs. We then conduct the dedication and placement of the reefs. We try to return to the dock no later than 1:00 PM. All times may vary depending on the reef location and weather.

During the boat ride to the memorial reef site, family and friends are given a *tribute reef* to decorate with fresh flowers as a dedication to their loved one. Once the family boat arrives at the



Memorial Reef site, each memorial is placed in the ocean one at a time as each individual's name is read. Family and friends are informed in advance to which memorial is being placed.

After all the Memorial Reefs have been placed, the placement boat moves away and the family boat is then moved over the memorial site. Each family is given an opportunity to individually dedicate the reef site to their loved one.

Once all of the individual dedications are completed, Eternal Reefs will dedicate the site to all the people who have become a part of the Memorial Reef. We will then read a short passage from "The Sea," a speech by President John F. Kennedy. The boat horn will then sound three times as a final tribute and we will start to make our way back to the dock.

Eternal Reefs will provide the tribute reef, assorted fresh flowers and bottled water for the boat ride to the Memorial Reef site. In most cases there will be a snack cart on the boat, but we suggest you bring any food items with you that would make your trip more comfortable.

Please keep in mind we are on the water and we strongly suggest not making return flight arrangements before 5:00 PM the day of the dedication.

The Family Boat:

Eternal Reefs will arrange a charter family boat to accommodate family and friends wishing to attend your loved ones reef dedication and placement. The cost is generally \$75 per person, regardless of age, for each person planning to attend.

All reservations for the family boat must be completed and paid by the time of the casting.



Other Considerations

Weather and the environment

There are a number of issues that can impact our ability to place the memorials on the day and time we have scheduled. Reef building is a marine construction project and it can be impacted by both weather and equipment availability. Wind and waves are always an important consideration. Even tidal fluctuations can cause delays and prevent the memorials being safely placed.

If you are prone to sea-sickness, please take appropriate steps to prepare for a journey on the water.

If for any reason Eternal Reefs is unable to place the memorials on the scheduled date or time, we will still take families and friends to dedicate the reef site if conditions allow. We will place the reefs as soon as possible and notify the families of the successful placement.

Dress appropriately

For your loved ones Memorial Reef casting, please wear outdoor clothing or something you wouldn't mind getting dirty. For your safety, please do not wear open toe shoes, heels or sandals. For the Memorial Reef viewing, please wear something comfortable. Remember, you will be writing messages, making rubbings of your loved ones bronze plaque and taking photos. Please be respectful of other families in your dress. Shirts and footwear are required.

On the day of the Memorial Reef dedication, you will need to pack for the unexpected, so be sure to bring both a jacket if it is chilly, or wear something a little cooler for those hot days. To protect your skin, sunscreen and hats are recommended. Also,

for older adults, young children and those of us who need a cool place to sit down and relax, the family boat offers both indoor and outdoor seating.

Weather conditions might change, so also bring an umbrella or rain jacket to all events.

Pets

For the safety of our families and for your pet, we can not allow pets to our events.

Flowers/Keepsakes

Eternal Reefs provides families with an assortment of fresh flowers for the Memorial Reef dedication ceremony as well as chalk and rubbing paper for the viewing ceremony. We have available for purchase a variety of keepsake items including Eternal Reefs t-shirts, hats, sterling silver pendants and tribute reef urns during our events.

Media and photographs

From time to time, members of the media request to attend our casting, viewing and dedication ceremonies. Our families always come first, so please know we respect your privacy. If you would like to speak with the media about your loved one, please let us know. Some families enjoy talking to the media. In fact, you might have found us by reading an article about Eternal Reefs or seeing us on TV.

If you're interested in helping us spread the word about Eternal Reefs, let us know. Also, if you're interested in letting your local

community know about your loved ones upcoming memorial placement, we would be pleased to help you contact the media.

We also take photos of our events and post them on our website. If for any reason you do not wish to be included in the photos, please let us know.



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