Stone is an extremely porous and often times delicate material, especially when aged and affected by prolonged exposure to weather and pollution. To successfully clean stone there are three main things to consider: pace, pressure, and working with appropriate cleaning agents.

The majority of tablets found within New Orleans Catholic Cemeteries are made of marble and granite. The instructions supplied within this handout are suitable for use on either type of stone.

### Tools

- Soft natural bristle brushes in an assortment of sizes
- Gloves
- Access to Water
  - *contact the cemetery office prior to cleaning to have water turned on in St. Louis Cemetery No. 2*
- Bucket
- Spray Bottle
- Safety Glasses
- D/2 Biological Solution – if cleaning with water alone is unsuccessful

### Cleaning with Water

As stated earlier, stone is an extremely porous and often times delicate material and so we advise all monument owners to first try cleaning with only water in order to lessen the stone’s exposure to chemicals and other agents. If at any point during the cleaning process you notice damage occurring (pieces of stone breaking off, cracks forming, etc.) stop what you are doing and contact a professional.

1. Thoroughly soak the stone. This can be done using the mist setting on a garden hose nozzle, by pouring buckets of water upon the surface, or by spraying with a hand-held spray bottle.

   *Note: power-washing and other high-impact pressure washing can cause irrevocable damage to the stone and should not be utilized under any circumstance.*

2. Once the stone is saturated with water, start cleaning with a brush from bottom to top using small circular motions with very light pressure. Working from bottom to top minimizes streaking, and using various size brushes will allow you to get into all the crevices. As you go along, spray down the areas of the stone with the spray bottle to remove any debris and dirt that you have dislodged. It will most likely be necessary to repeat the entire process a few times due to evaporation and based upon the degree of soiling.

3. When the stone is cleaned to your satisfaction thoroughly flush it with water in order to remove any residue.
Cleaning with D/2 Biological Solution

If using water alone to clean the stone proves unsuccessful, New Orleans Catholic Cemeteries recommends the use of D/2 Biological Solution, which has proven to be a safe and effective way of removing biological growth.

The following directions have been supplied from the company’s website.

Immediate Result Method

1. Apply D/2 Biological Solution with a brush, roller, or hand pump sprayer (garden style pump sprayer).
2. Allow undiluted D/2 to remain on the surface 10-15 minutes.
3. Apply additional D/2 as necessary to maintain a wet surface.
4. Scrub with soft nylon or natural bristle brush. **DO NOT USE METAL BRUSH.**
5. Lightly mist with water and continue scrubbing.
6. Rinse thoroughly with clean, potable water.

Reapply if rain occurs within 12 hours of application.

No Scrub/No Rinse Method

1. Using a sprayer (pump-up, low pressure, or other,) wet the entire surface with D/2.
2. Allow to air dry.

D/2 works with the elements and results occur within one week to one month, depending on severity of soiling. Reapply if rain occurs within 12 hours of application.

Additional Resources

The National Center of Preservation Technology and Training has a number of helpful videos available on their website including this one entitled ‘Cleaning a Stone Grave Marker’:

The National Park Service has also produced a Preservation Brief on preserving grave markers in historic cemeteries that is available for viewing and downloads at the following website:

D/2 Biological Solutions
http://d2bio.com

If any signs of damage appear during cleaning, or if you are interested in a larger restoration, New Orleans Catholic Cemeteries maintains a restoration crew who are competent and experienced in repairing and restoring all types of memorials.

Expert appraisals and proposals can be obtained from our office without any obligation to the owner. Let us explain how we can serve you in making needed repairs or restoring a valuable family memorial.

Contact us for information on restoring your family's sacred grave and for information about our Perpetual Care Program - 504-227-3246 or 504-596-3050, or email: jconnor@arch-no.org

The information and instructions provided above were sourced from the NCPTT, National Park Service, and D/2 Biological Solutions. New Orleans Catholic Cemeteries does not take any responsibility for possible damages incurred by individuals performing the cleaning themselves.