

IAOPCC Launches Industry's First Certified Pet Alkaline Hydrolysis Operator Program

IAOPCC announces the launch of the industry's only Certified Pet Alkaline Hydrolysis Operator (CPAO) Program for pet aftercare professionals.

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*Donna Shugart-Bethune,
Executive Director, IAOPCC*

Association of Pet Cemeteries & Crematories ([IAOPCC](#)) is proud to announce another historical first for the pet aftercare profession: the launch of the industry's first-ever Certified Pet Alkaline Hydrolysis Operator (CPAO) Program. This milestone program debuted at the IAOPCC's 54th Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas, on September 18, 2025, where 30 operators successfully earned their certifications in pet water cremation. Each graduate received an official certification along with a digital badge credential—a modern, portable recognition of their achievement that validates their expertise to clients, veterinary partners, and the public.

Setting Standards in Water Cremation Education

Alkaline Hydrolysis, also known as “Water Cremation,” is one of the fastest-growing, environmentally sustainable practices in pet aftercare. The IAOPCC's CPAO Program is the first comprehensive training and certification of its kind dedicated exclusively to this pet aftercare process. The curriculum, developed in collaboration with the Cremation Association of North America (CANA) and the IAOPCC Standards & Accreditation Committee, is comprehensive in nature and covers every aspect of professional practice, including:

- The Alkaline Hydrolysis Process in Detail
- Equipment and Operations
- Chain of Custody Protocols
- Reducing Legal Risk
- Environmental Impact and Best Practices

“The Certified Pet Alkaline Hydrolysis Operator Program represents a major milestone in the professionalization of pet water cremation,” said Donna Shugart-Bethune, IAOPCC Executive Director. “This program underscores the importance of education in building trust, ensuring safe

and ethical operations, and strengthening consumer confidence in the evolving field of pet aftercare."

A Shared Commitment to Professional Standards

The CPAO Program reflects IAOPCC's long-standing mission to advance professional standards and provide robust educational pathways for both current operators and those entering the pet aftercare profession. Barbara Kemmis, Executive Director of the Cremation Association of North America (CANA), praised the partnership, stating: "CANA is honored to partner with the IAOPCC on this groundbreaking initiative. Certification ensures that operators are not only technically proficient but also uphold the highest standards of compassion, ethics, and care. Together, we are setting the bar for professional excellence in alkaline hydrolysis."



Recognized Leaders in Pet Aftercare

Registration for Online Program Now Open

Following its successful debut in San Antonio, the Certified Pet Alkaline Hydrolysis Operator Program is now available online, making it accessible to a global audience of professionals. Participants who successfully complete the course will earn 6 CEUs and receive both a printable certificate and a digital badge credential for ongoing recognition. [Register](https://www.iaopc.com/page/cpcp) at <https://www.iaopc.com/page/cpcp>

About IAOPCC

Founded in 1971, the International Association of Pet Cemeteries & Crematories (IAOPCC) is the only international organization committed to advancing the standards, ethics, and education of pet aftercare professionals. Through conferences, certification programs, and its rigorous Accreditation Program, the IAOPCC leads the way in supporting pet families and professionals worldwide.

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