

**Salisbury City Council.  
Grave Digging/Backfilling  
Salisbury Cemeteries: (London Road & Devizes Road)**

**Annex B**

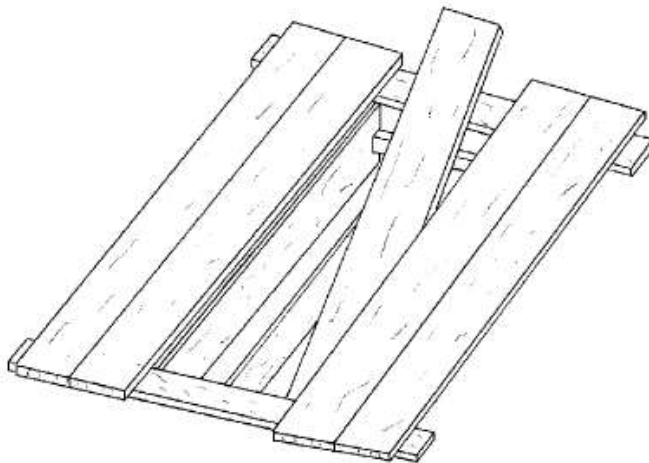
**Backfilling**

Backfilling should commence immediately after all mourners have left the cemetery and be completed fully on the same working day.

Webbings and grass mats must be removed before backfilling commences.

Walkboards should be left in place during the whole of the backfilling procedure so as to prevent persons walking on any unprotected grave edge.

**Protection of the coffin**



When backfilling large flints, pieces of rock or lumps of clay may damage the coffin when they impact from height. To reduce the risk of coffin damage a timber can be placed into the grave as shown in the above diagram. Backfill material will strike the timber, break its speed of fall and deflect to the sides of the grave.

**Mourner Participation**

Some ethnic and religious groups require carrying out the backfilling of the grave themselves.

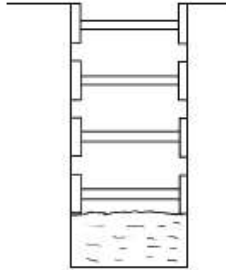
There is a conflict between health and safety and customer care in this situation and it is for the individual burial authority or Cemetery Company to assess the risk involved and decide whether to permit mourners to backfill.

Should it be decided to permit mourners to backfill the manager or supervisor in charge must take control of proceedings and stop backfilling at the relevant stages in order that gravediggers can remove shoring equipment.

It is vital to the health and safety of mourners that co-operation between cemetery staff, mourners and the Funeral Director conducting the funeral is established.

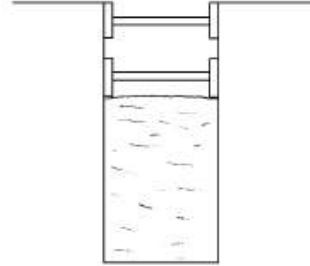
**Backfilling Removing Timber Shoring. Stable, Cohesive Ground**  
**Timbers 1' (0.3m) in depth. Grave depth 7' (2.13m)**

1.



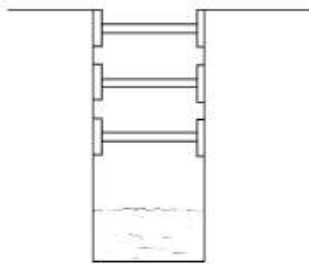
Backfill and consolidate to underside of lowest set of timbers.

5.



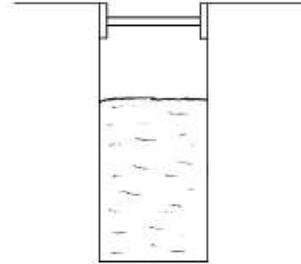
Backfill and consolidate to underside of next set of timbers.

2.



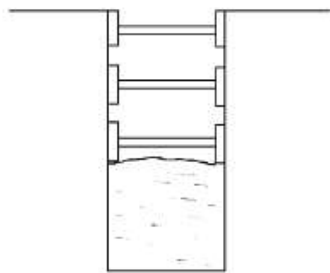
Remove lowest set of timbers.

6.



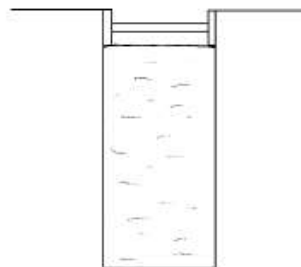
Continue process of backfilling and consolidating

3.

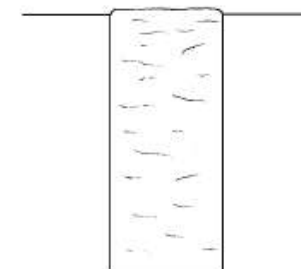


Backfill and consolidate to underside of next set of timbers

7.

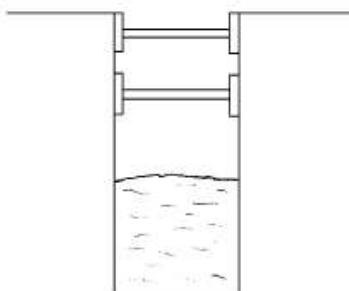


8.



Complete backfilling and consolidation.

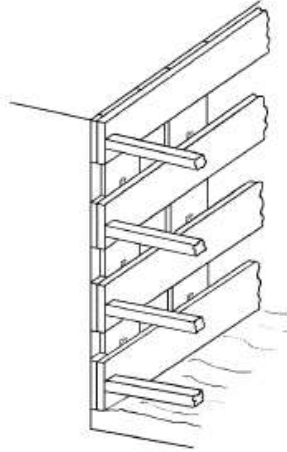
4.



Remove next set of timbers

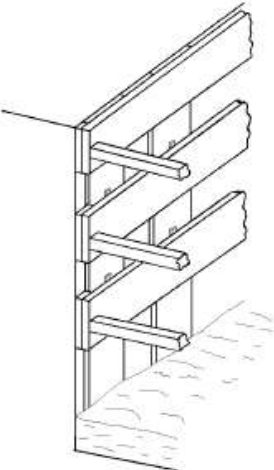
## Backfilling Removing Timber Piling / Polling Unstable, Non Cohesive Ground

1.



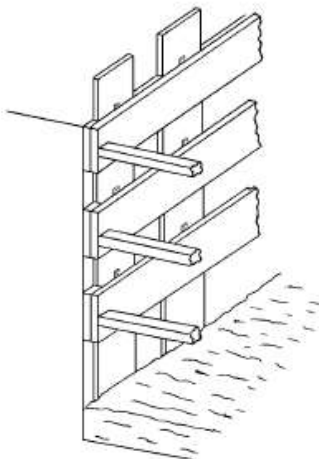
Backfill to underside of lowest set of horizontal timbers.

2.



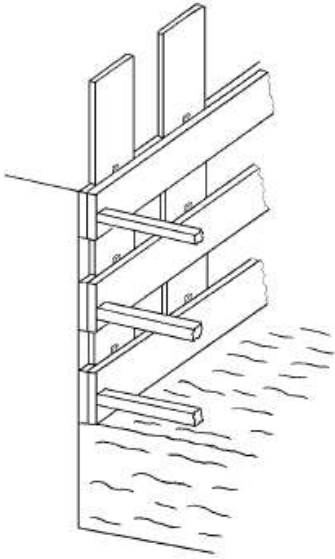
The bottom of the piling timbers can be covered with soil at this stage. The soil in the bottom of the grave can be consolidated before the lowest set of horizontal timbers is removed. The consolidated soil will provide additional support to the piling timbers while a gravedigger enters the grave to remove the lowest set of horizontal timbers.

3.



The piling timbers can be lifted one at a time so that their bottom edges are level with the top of the previously consolidated soil. The wedges are removed from **one** piling timber before it is lifted and are replaced immediately after repositioning.

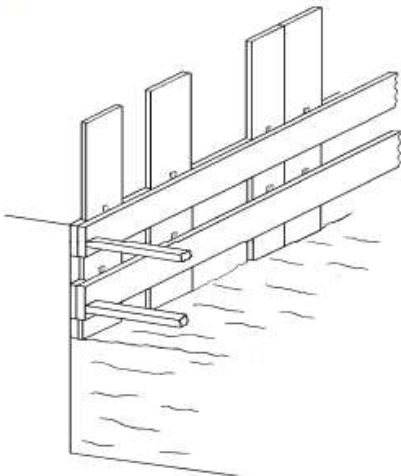
4.



Backfill grave to underside of next set of horizontal timbers.

The process described in 1, 2, and 3 is repeated until the grave is completely backfilled.

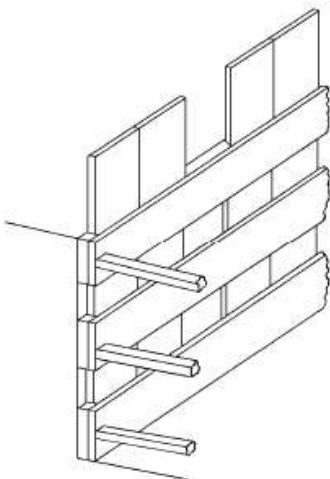
5.



During backfilling operations the piling timbers will protrude from the grave to a height where difficulty may be encountered attempting to shovel soil over the tops of the piling timbers.

To ease this situation **one** piling timber may be repositioned so that it is butted up to the next piling timber. Soil can be shovelled through the gap created.

6.



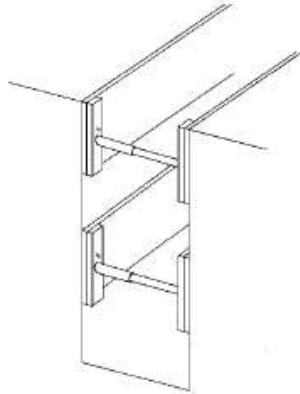
When close piling is incorporated **one piling timber** can be removed to aid ease of backfilling. This timber should only be removed to carry out the final stages of backfilling.

Unstable soils such as running sand and gravel may *run* through the gap. This should be minimal however should a large quantity of soil begin to move a shorter piling timber can be inserted to stem flow.

## Backfilling Removing Hydraulic Shoring in Stable Cohesive Ground

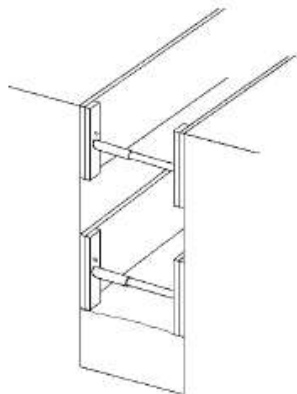
Unit Depth 2' (0.61m). Grave Depth 7' (2.13m).

1.



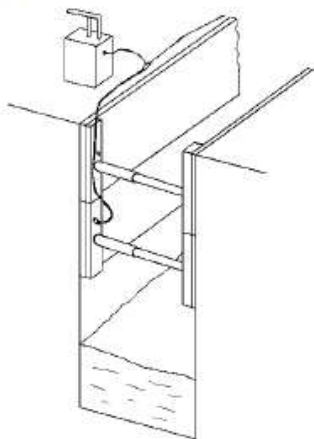
Remove grass matting and webbings.

2.



Backfill and consolidate to underside of bottom unit.

3.

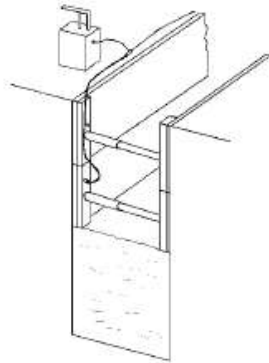


Connect two-way hose to rams of bottom unit placing hoses behind rams of top unit.

Attach lifting ropes to bottom unit and release pressure from rams of bottom unit.

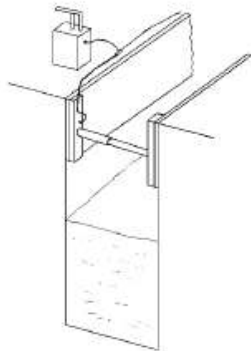
Raise bottom unit to underside of top unit and pressurise rams to holding pressure.

4.



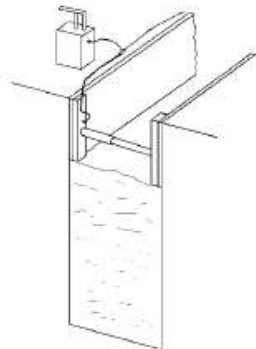
Backfill and consolidate to underside of bottom unit.

5.



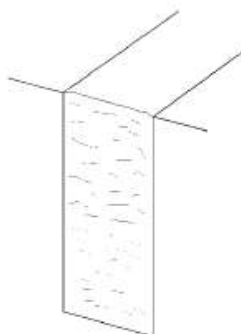
Release pressure on rams from top unit using the release tool and lift top unit from grave.  
Release pressure from rams of remaining unit by turning valve on pump.  
Raise bottom unit to ground level, realign pump valve and pump out to holding pressure.

6.



Backfill and consolidate to underside of remaining unit.

7.



Release pressure from rams of remaining unit, remove hoses from rams using release tool and lift the unit from the grave.  
Backfill and consolidate leaving the grave slightly mounded.

## Backfilling : Removing Hydraulic Shoring from Unstable, Non - Cohesive Ground.

The following procedure describes the removal of 1 x 1' (0.3m) and 3 x 2' (0.61) hydraulic shoring units from a grave of 7' (2.13m) depth.

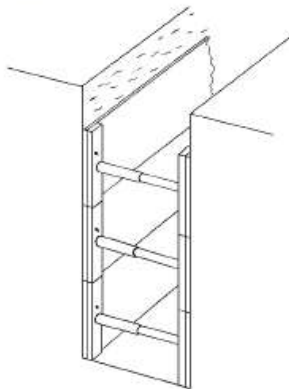
1.



Remove webbings and grass matting from the grave. Walkboards are not shown in the following diagrams but they must remain in position throughout the whole of the backfilling process. To enable ease of removal of hydraulic units the walkboards can be repositioned.

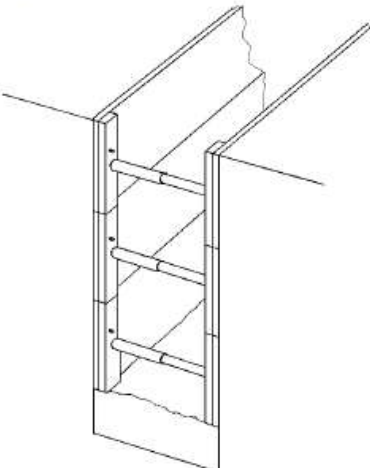
Release pressure from rams of top unit using the release tool and remove from the grave.

2.



Connect hoses and lifting ropes to next unit.

3.



Release pressure from rams of uppermost unit by turning the valve on the pump, lift unit so that its top edge is level with the surface and repressurise rams to holding pressure.

Connect hoses to rams of next unit and repeat the above process for the next unit lifting it to the underside of the uppermost unit and repressurising rams.

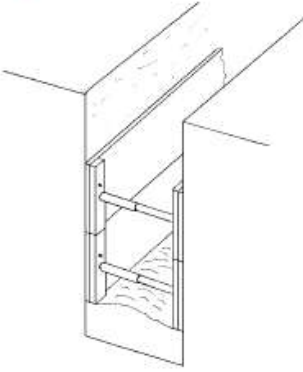
Repeat process again for lower unit.

Backfill and consolidate to underside of bottom unit.

Ideally employers will make available sufficient hoses so that hoses can remain connected and dedicated to all rams throughout the process. This action will make it unnecessary for a gravedigger to enter the grave to connect hoses to the lower units. The time taken to backfill the grave will be reduced which may reduce the risk of collapse during backfilling.

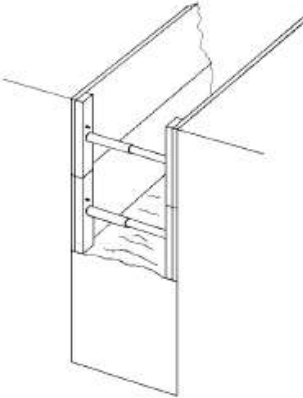
Release pressure from rams of uppermost unit and remove from the grave.

4.



Attach lifting ropes to next unit and connect hoses to rams (if not already connected to dedicated hoses).

5.



Release pressure from rams of uppermost unit by turning valve on pump, lift unit until its top edge is level with the surface of the grave and re-pressurise rams to holding pressure.

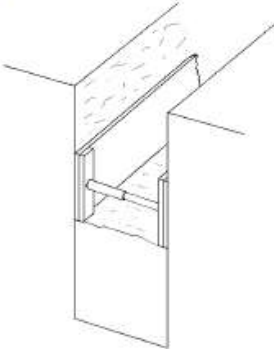
*(NOTE : where local conditions and results of local risk assessments indicate, it may be necessary to raise units in stages so as to reduce the risk of collapse of exposed areas of the grave walls)*

Repeat this process for lower unit lifting it to underside of uppermost unit before re-pressurising rams.

Backfill and consolidate to underside of lower unit.

Release pressure from uppermost unit and remove from the grave.

6.



Attach lifting ropes to remaining unit and connect hoses to rams (if dedicated hoses not already connected).

7.



Release pressure by turning valve on pump and lift unit until its top edge is level with the surface of the grave. Re-pressurise rams to holding pressure.

Remove hoses from rams.

Backfill and consolidate to underside of remaining unit.

The remaining unit can be removed from the grave by releasing the pressure from the rams using the release tool and lifting it from the grave. Backfilling and consolidation can then be completed.