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State funeral regulators shut down Kansas City funeral home

Jefferson City, Mo. – The license of a Kansas City funeral home has been revoked by state regulators. Marts Memorial Services, located at 14 Westport Road, has been on probation with the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors since May 2009. The board announced Tuesday it had revoked the license of the funeral home after finding multiple probation violations.

The state board's action also revokes the funeral director license of owner Ronald Marts, as well as his license to provide preneed funerals, in which consumers sign contracts and pay for funeral services before their death.

The board put Marts Memorial Services on probation for numerous violations of state law, including failure to properly refrigerate bodies, failure to file death certificates, failure to use proper authorization forms for cremation and forging an embalmer's signature.

During the probation period, based on consumer complaints and board inspections, the board found Marts:

- Sold preneed funerals without a state license;
- Failed to refrigerate in compliance with state law;
- Was less than cooperative and honest with the board's inspectors; and
- In one case, gave the wrong ashes to a man whose wife had died and gave a false explanation to the man.

“Revoking the license of a funeral home is the most serious option available to our board, and we don't take this decision lightly,” said Gary Fraker, chairman of the Missouri Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors. “Because Mr. Marts failed to use his probation time to correct this long list of violations, our action is necessary to prevent future consumers from becoming victims during their time of need.”

The license revocation means Marts Memorial Services must cease doing business on Dec. 31. Because it revokes his individual licenses, Ronald Marts is also forbidden from practicing as a funeral director in Missouri.

About the Missouri Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration

The Missouri Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration (DIFP) are responsible for consumer protection through the regulation of financial industries and professionals. The department's seven divisions work to maintain consumer confidence by examining and monitoring industries and professions and by establishing coherent and evolving policies. DIFP works to enforce state regulations both efficiently and effectively while encouraging a competitive environment for industries and professions to ensure consumers have access to quality products.

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