

Archaeological Factsheet



Anyone planning construction activities who is concerned about the potential for encountering such burials is encouraged to contact the OSA for additional information and assistance. The OSA may be available for on-site visits to identify burial features and areas. If such burials are accidentally uncovered in the course of construction or other activities:

- Excavation should cease
- Secure the area
- Contact OSA as soon as possible
- If there is any reason to suspect that the remains may be part of a crime scene, secure the area and notify your local law enforcement agency immediately

Office of the State Archaeologist

Established in 1963, the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) is charged with sponsoring, conducting and directing research into the prehistoric and historic archaeology of Minnesota; protecting and preserving archaeological sites and objects; disseminating archaeological information through the publication of reports and articles; identifying, authenticating and protecting human burial sites; reviewing and licensing archaeological fieldwork conducted within the state; and enforcing provisions of MN Statutes [138.31-138.42](#) and [307.08](#).

Under MN Statutes [138.31-138.42](#), licensure through the OSA is required for field archaeology undertaken on all lands or waters owned, leased by or subject to the paramount right of the state or its subdivisions, as well as on lands impacted by publicly-funded development projects. Proposed projects are reviewed to assess the appropriateness of research methodology and to assist in identifying strategies for mitigating potential adverse effects to known cultural resources. Only professional archaeologists meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology (36 CFR Part 61) may be licensed to conduct such investigations in the state of Minnesota. A copy of the application form, including terms and conditions for licensure, can be obtained by contacting the above address.

The OSA has the right to enter all non-federal property for the purpose of authentication, but the State Archaeologist will always attempt to gain landowner permission before undertaking an authentication.

The OSA also maintains a database of the state's identified archaeological sites in collaboration with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

OSA: <http://www.osa.admin.state.mn.us>

SHPO: <http://www.mnhs.org/shpo>

MN Archaeological Society: <http://www.mnarchsociety.org>

Misc: <http://www.fromsitetostory.org/>

Burial Sites

Section [307.08](#) of Minnesota's "Private Cemeteries Act" (MS 307) affords all human burial grounds and remains older than 50 years and located outside of platted or identified cemeteries protection from unauthorized disturbance. This statute applies to burials on either public or private lands or waters, and includes prehistoric Indian burial mounds as well as historic cemeteries.

Authentication of burial sites is conducted under the sole auspices of the OSA per this statute. In the event that a burial is either known or suspected to be associated with American Indian peoples, the OSA works in concert with representatives of Minnesota's tribal communities to ensure the integrity of such burial sites. The OSA maintains a database of identified burial sites in the state.

For more information or for a list of licensed archaeologists, please contact Crow Wing County (see contact info below).

