

Cemeteries filling up

IF burials continue at the present rate, cemeteries in the south-eastern suburbs could be full within 15 years.

As the shortage of available land reaches acute levels, cemeteries are under increasing pressure to find sustainable ways to maximise the use of the land they have remaining.

In response to an urgent need from the Jewish community, Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park at Matraville recently consecrated a new Jewish lawn which provides and additional 500 graves.

The move was welcomed by the Jewish community but George Passas, chief executive officer of the cemetery, warned that "without any additional land being allocated soon, and based on current burials, we have calculated that the cemetery will be full in 15 years".

Mr Passas identified the Greek, Italian and Asian communities as those

in urgent need of additional space and said that the cemetery "will soon be releasing news of limited additional areas" of these groups.

"We're being pressured by everybody", Mr Passas said. "The concerns are not going to go away".

Mary Thorne, president of the Cemeteries and Crematoria Association of NSW, agreed that the issue was a pressing one. "It is a problem that that has to be dealt with" she said. "It's getting urgent".

Earlier this year, the Department of Lands, which owns the Crown land many cemeteries lie on, released a discussion paper outlining the issues around the land shortage and aiming to "explore issues and promote discussion within the community on the available options".

According to the Department of Lands spokesman, the department received 63 written submissions in response to the paper and hopes to release a report by early next year.

One option that has been proposed to alleviate the crisis is the notion of renewable tenure.



George Passas CEO of Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park, has warned that cemeteries are running out of space. Photo: ERIN BYRNE

Renewable tenure, which is already practised at Waverley Cemetery, occurs when grave sites are purchased for an initial set period of time (for example 25 or 50 years). At the end of that period, the holder (usually a family member) is given the option to renew their tenure. In the event that tenure for a plot is not renewed, the cemetery has the authority to reuse the site in the future. Martin Forester-Reid, manager of Waverley Cemetery said limited renewable tenure had been in place there since 1992 and had "indefinitely lengthened" the opera-

tional capacity of the cemetery. "Without the implementation of the renewable tenure, we may well have been a very different cemetery by now," Mr Forrester-Reid said. "We probably would have exhausted our capacity, possibly 10 years ago."

Mr Passas, who supports renewable tenure, said that while "clearly the Government had to make a decision", on how to move forward "it is crucial that the matter be dealt with respectfully and with sensitivity to the requirements of various ethnic and religious groups."



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Viewers get a taste for Yianni

MOST Kingsford residents would be surprised to learn that a popular life-style television show is being filmed under their noses and broadcast to audiences in four states.

Producer and presenter Yianni Zinonos has just wrapped up the fifth series of his television show,

Yiannis City Life, which he produces and films in his own home.

The show, which airs on community television station TVS, features a combination of food, fashion, lifestyle, and community segments.

"It's great to be able to produce something in your

own home", Mr Zinonos said.

"The homely nature of the show is part of its charm.

"Nowadays networks try to make TV studios look like homes but this is a real home with real friends and real guests".

Each episode screens three times a week on TVS, which is a free-to-air com-

munity channel available on the frequency UHF 31. "It's a great chance to be involved with the community", Mr Zinonos said.

"People love the homely recipes and the fact that the show is very informal and friendly.

"I get to meet a lot of really good people and there's a lot of social good will".

While he loves community television, and describes TVS as "incredibly supportive" and "a very nurturing environment", Mr Zinonos said that he was excited the show had attracted some interest from commercial networks - particularly as it is made on zero budget and by volunteers.

"It's not for-profit and it's great to get a non-commercial identity out there in the mainstream", he said.



Kingsford resident Yianni Zinonos gets cooking for his lifestyle television show. Photo: ERIN BYRNE

Yianni's City Life screens on TVS on Mondays at 8pm. The show is repeated on Wednesdays at 8.30 am and Fridays at noon.