# How to clean a monument

The following do's and don'ts should help you clean your monuments safely. Always keep this in mind that once a monument is damaged…. it is damaged and there are no do-overs.

1. Determine the type of stone to be cleaned – marble, granite, slate or sandstone
2. Evaluate the condition of the stone – look for cracks, see if the surface is eroding and appears to be sugary. If these symptoms are visible, DO NOT CLEAN THE STONE, it will cause more harm than good.
3. Determine what type of soiling or staining is visible. The most common types are:
   o Dirt
   o Lichen (green leafy growth)
   o Algae (green or black staining)
   o Moss
4. To start cleaning always moisten the monument well with water. It is best to clean a monument after a good rain. Never apply any products or remove growth from a dry stone.
   * If a layer of moss or lichen is on the stone, it can be removed gently with a plastic or wooden spatula or paint scraper (NEVER USE METAL !!!).
5. Always consider the gentlest method possible to clean a stone. A soft natural bristle brush and toothbrushes for smaller areas are acceptable to use. DO NOT USE WIRE BRUSHES, STEEL WOOL OR ABRASIVE SPONGES.
6. Gently brush the areas to be cleaned and flush with water constantly to remove stains and soil. Clean from the bottom up to prevent streak staining.
7. If a cleaning agent is to be used, proceed with caution and NEVER USE FULL STRENGTH. Here are some products that are recommended:
   o Ammonia (household variety) with no additives, mixed at one cup ammonia, one cup water. This will help remove some staining on light colored stones.
   o D2 (antimicrobial cleaner) can be ordered from www.cathedralstone.com. This is the best and safest product on the market now. They will even give you a free trial size.

DO NOT USE BLEACH, ORANGE CLEANERS, COMET, OR ANY OTHER HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS. DO NOT USE MURATIC ACID FOR MASONRY CLEANING. All of these products may result in ferrous staining (rust) and all result in the deposition of soluble salts.