

What is graffiti?

Graffiti is an act of vandalism that can cause a financial burden for property owners, business and taxpayers.

Graffiti is defined as writing, drawing or symbols applied to any surface without the consent of the property owner, authorized agent or designate.

Graffiti vandals use a variety of materials such as spray paint, crayons and permanent ink to deface property. Hobby knives and razor blades are used to cause permanent damage to glass and other surfaces.

Where does graffiti crime occur?

Graffiti crime can occur anywhere. Some of the more popular targets include:

- Public and private buildings
- Recreational facilities
- Newspaper boxes
- Municipal street furniture
- Utility boxes
- Parks and playgrounds
- Bridges and overpass
- Public transit property and vehicles
- Canada Post mail boxes and property

How does this problem develop?

Graffiti follows the broken windows theory. If a factory or office window is broken, passers-by will conclude that no one cares or is in charge. In time, a few people will begin throwing rocks to break more windows. Soon, all the windows will be broken. Not only will passers-by think that no one is in charge of the building, now they will also think that no one is in charge of the street where the building stands, or of the neighbourhood it's located in.

How graffiti affects our community!

- Increased taxes to fund clean-up programs;
- Local property values may decrease;
- Heightened fear of crime in the community;
- Local economy may decline causing small businesses to close; and
- Graffiti gives the impression that no one cares about the overall state of the community.

How to reduce graffiti in our community?

The five component approach:

1. Timely Clean-up

Graffiti should be removed as quickly as possible, by painting it over, sand or soda blasting or applying artistic mural.

2. Deterrence

To a graffiti writer a blank visible wall presents an attractive opportunity, we can deter graffiti by structure and environment change.

- Restrict access to walls by planting ivy, thorny bushes or trees;
- Apply graffiti-resistant coatings to protect walls;
- Increase lighting and visibility in vulnerable areas;
- Install video surveillance to monitor isolated areas; and
- Establish a strong Neighbourhood Watch Program.

3. Education

All partners involved must promote and educate their organizations as to the importance of eradicating graffiti.

4. Maintenance

Ongoing maintenance will ensure that graffiti does not creep back. Sites must be regularly monitored and effective techniques to deter repeat vandalism must be used.

The "GOAL" is to prove that improved levels of care are as contagious as poor levels of care.

5. Enforcement

Every effort will be made to charge graffiti writers under the Criminal Code with mischief. With your help in reporting suspicious behaviour, we can stop graffiti



Community Response Unit
Crime Prevention

What you can do to help!

All of us must take ownership in order to reduce graffiti on public and private property.

Here's how you can make a difference:

- When witnessing suspicious behaviour or graffiti crime, call police immediately;
- Provide police with descriptions of the suspects, and their vehicle, including the make, model, colour and licence plate number;
- Report all graffiti crime by calling the police at **(705) 675-9171**;
- To anonymously report graffiti crime, call Crimestoppers at **(705) 675-8477**; and
- Once reported to the police, remove graffiti as quickly as possible.

The quick removal of graffiti is the most effective means to prevent further acts of vandalism.

Graffiti.



OUR COMMUNITY
OUR COMMITMENT