



GRAFFITI PREVENTION & ENFORCEMENT

Code Enforcement & Public Health

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To promote a safe and attractive community, the City of Brooklyn Park has regulation regarding graffiti and graffiti removal. Information and general guidelines regarding graffiti and its removal are described below.

What is Graffiti?

Graffiti is a public nuisance and a common form of vandalism. Graffiti vandals write, scribe, etch, or spray-paint on many surfaces. Graffiti perpetrators are often associated with other criminal activities, including violent crimes. A neighborhood plagued by graffiti becomes unappealing to perspective homeowners and tenants. Not removing graffiti encourages littering, violence and more graffiti.

Prohibited Acts

Defacement: It is unlawful for any person to apply graffiti to any natural or man-made surface on any publicly or privately owned property.

Graffiti As Nuisance

The existence of graffiti on public or private property in violation of city ordinance is expressly declared to be a public nuisance and therefore is subject to the removal and abatement.

- **Duty of Property owner:** It is the duty of both the property owner and/ or the occupant in possession of a property, to at all times keep the property clear of graffiti.
- **Perpetrator:** The City may require the guilty perpetrator to either remove or pay for the costs for the removal of the graffiti within twenty-four (24) hours. A perpetrator may be charged civilly, as well as criminally.

- **Repeat Violations:** If a property is subject to three or more occurrences of graffiti within one year, application or anti-graffiti material of a type and nature that is acceptable to the city may be required for each of the publicly viewable surfaces, or imposed during improvements or construction activities to the site.

Graffiti Reporting

IMMEDIATELY REPORT ALL GRAFFITI DAMAGE TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

If you have information on individuals involved with the crime, see graffiti in progress, or if the damage is less than an hour old, **call 911 as soon as possible.**

It is essential to get photographic documentation whenever possible. A color Polaroid picture or standard snapshot is sufficient. Photographs allow police investigators to link vandals to other cases. Pictures also help insurance companies to make accurate damage assessments. (If the vandal is positively identified, more severe penalties and restitution are possible.) Immediately take steps to remove or cover graffiti.

Graffiti Removal

Ideally, graffiti should be removed within 24 hours after it is applied. If this is done, the perpetrator is denied the satisfaction of having their "artwork" displayed for all to see.

Graffiti Removal Tips

Effective graffiti-removal products formulated for a variety of wall surfaces are available at hardware and paint stores. Professional graffiti-removal contractors may also be used.

Follow manufacturer's directions when using graffiti-removal products, as many are toxic. Several of the newer products are biodegradable and less toxic. Be sure to wear rubber gloves, safety goggles, and an OSHA approved respirator while removing graffiti.

Some helpful tips can be found in various resources for removing graffiti, from a variety of surfaces are described below. Always test a small inconspicuous area first!

- **Brick, Cement, or Concrete:** Use extra strength paint remover. Apply with a wire brush or some products come with a sprayer. Scrub area with wire brush, and then allow to dry. Rinse with a forceful stream of water from a hose. Some surfaces may have to be done more than once.
- **Stucco:** Apply extra strength paint remover. Seal area with "KILZ" and then paint over the area with stucco paint. If the affected area has been tagged more than once, you should sand blast the wall first.
- **Aluminum Siding:** "Goof Off" works quite well on latex paint, but not on oil-based paint. Oil-based paint siding can be cleaned up with a full strength paint remover, but sparingly and carefully!
- **Wood:** On latex or oil-based painted wood use "KILZ" to seal the graffiti. Paint over quickly so the graffiti won't bleed through. If the area is stained and varnished, use paint remover with sprayer, and wipe off with a cloth rag.
- **Fiberglass:** Use a full strength paint remover and rinse carefully. Carburetor cleaner works well

Get organized. Form or participate in your apartment or block club/neighborhood watch force. Encourage young people to help.

Consider physical changes to make your property less of a target:

- On blank walls, use clinging vegetation to eliminate large writing surfaces.
- Use thorny or thick bushes and fences to keep people out of or away from likely graffiti areas.
- Eliminate items (pay phones, benches, etc.) that encourage people to loiter near your building after business hours.
- Increase lighting around your property. Install motion detector lights.
- Chose dark paint colors for your building; they are less attractive to graffiti vandals.
- Make sure your property is well maintained and cared for.
- Establish a clear boundary between public property and your property.

City Contacts and Resources

If you have information on graffiti vandals or to report graffiti in progress, please contact:

**Police Department
911**

For information on graffiti removal, please contact:

**Code Enforcement & Public Health Division
763-493-8070**

This brochure is intended only as a general guide. Other codes and ordinances may apply. You can reference ordinances at the city website by visiting www.brooklynpark.org