

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR REMOVING GRAFFITI

The following information is to be used as a guide only.

### Non-Sensitive Surfaces

(Painted wood siding, painted concrete, etc.)

- Apply a stain-killing primer or pigmented shellac. This seals the graffiti and keeps it from bleeding through fresh paint.
- Repaint the surface with an appropriate color. Poor paint jobs can lead to more graffiti; try to match.

### Sensitive Surfaces

(Brick, stucco, metal, glass, etc.)

- Use extra strength paint remover or graffiti remover. Apply with a wire brush and allow it to dry. Rinse with a forceful stream of water.
- Use paint remover and wash off with a high-pressure water hose.
- Use stucco paint and carefully cover graffiti.
- Use paint remover sparingly; rinse carefully.
- Use carburetor cleaner if regular cleaners do not work. Use caution with Plexiglas as it scratches easily.

Consult your local paint store for advice and clarification on the pros and cons of graffiti removal tech niques.

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

**Volunteers** can strengthen our community and help make Arlington a graffiti-free city.

**Participating** as a volunteer in a graffiti management program has numerous benefits for you and your neighborhood including:

- Building capacity to manage graffiti in your neighborhood.
- Bringing residents together to develop community solutions.
- Becoming a role model in your community.
- Proactively engaging neighbors to prevent crime.
- Increasing safety and cleanliness.

Helping to promote and maintain healthy neighborhoods.

## YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

**WIPEOUT Graffiti** is a local group of citizen volunteers that work with the City of Arlington and is dedicated to wiping out graffiti anywhere it is located. This group's motto is, "Taking back our city; one wall, one fence, one 'tag' at a time." They volunteer their time and labor to anyone within the city that can't remove the graffiti themselves. Paint and supplies are provided by the city, property owners, businesses, or donated by the community.



## PREVENTION

One of the most effective ways to prevent graffiti is to keep your property neat and clean. Vandals do not commonly target properties that appear to be occupied and cared for. Rapid removal of graffiti is an effective prevention tool as well. Data shows that removal within 48 hours results in nearly zero rate of recurrence. City of Arlington Municipal Code 9.28.050 requires that graffiti be removed within 48 hours. The party responsible for the property can be issued civil infractions (fined) for each day it is not removed.

Check out WIPEOUT Graffiti's Facebook Page for more information or to volunteer:

[www.arlingtonwa.gov/GraffitiVolunteer](http://www.arlingtonwa.gov/GraffitiVolunteer)

To donate towards the purchase of supplies and paint for our volunteers and this program, please visit the City of Arlington's Graffiti Removal Program:

[www.arlingtonwa.gov/Donate](http://www.arlingtonwa.gov/Donate)

Or donate in person at the Arlington Police Department, 110 East Third Street, Arlington Washington, 98223



**GRAFFITI!**  
**INDISCRETION**  
IS A SERIOUS CRIME

Help Make Arlington

**TAG-FREE**



425-407-3999



## SPRAY PAINT GRAFFITI IS A CRIME

Spray paint vandalism or "graffiti" is the unauthorized etching, painting or placing of a mark on public or private property. While some people may hear the word graffiti and think of it as an art form or a mode of freestyle expression, the reality is that graffiti is an act of vandalism that costs Arlington taxpayers thousands of dollars annually to remove or cover.

### TAGGING IS DESTRUCTIVE

The most common type of graffiti in the City of Arlington is "tagging" which is the writing and/or painting of an identifiable symbolic character or "tag" that may or may not contain letters. The tag becomes a "signature" for the vandal who may experience pride and a developing recognition among other taggers.

### TAGGING GRAFFITI

Individuals involved in this form of graffiti refer to themselves as taggers. They gain fame and status from other taggers by painting their distinctive tags in as many places as possible. They may also paint "pieces," which are highly stylized murals. This form of graffiti is usually illegible to the untrained eye and intended to be seen by other taggers.

### GANG GRAFFITI

This form of graffiti is less common and gang members or their associates are responsible. Gang graffiti is a method of communication that is used to promote a gang, mark territory, recruit new members or to intimidate a neighborhood. In either circumstance, vandals disregard the rights of property owners, seek notoriety and generally disrespect community rules, laws and consequences.

## ANYTHING BUT A "VICTIMLESS" CRIME

Spray paint vandalism often occurs on public property meaning bridges, utility boxes, and signage; individual citizens can be directly affected when they find their garages, vehicles and fences have been "tagged". In addition to the associated costs with removal, graffiti can result in an area looking unsafe or intimidating. It reduces property values and can create an open invitation for more littering, loitering and can invite even more vandalism. It may also lead to an increase in other criminal behavior and acts of violence. And overall, a graffiti-ridden city does not leave a good impression with tourists and other visitors. The City of Arlington Public Works Team is on the job as quickly as possible year-round; however, due to volumes there may be delays. The City spends thousands of dollars annually on graffiti removal.

### OUR GOAL

We are working towards our goal of a clean, safe, graffiti-free city by:

- Removing graffiti as quickly as possible.
- Increasing community capacity to manage graffiti.
- Enhancing civic pride and prosperity for residents and businesses.
- Encouraging the use of prevention techniques.
- Providing easy and accessible reporting options.
- Supporting residents and businesses with appropriate tools and resources.
- Involving businesses, residents, youth, community organizations and graffiti writers as partners.
- Adopting best practices and research based solutions to manage graffiti.



### RECORD

It's a great idea to quickly snap a photo of the graffiti even using your mobile device.

This helps investigators determine patterns and to link the offender to other crimes.

Email the photo to [police@arlingtonwa.gov](mailto:police@arlingtonwa.gov).

### REPORT

All graffiti incidents, whether in progress or not, can be reported to the police non-emergency number: 425-407-3999.

- If the incident is in progress a police unit may be dispatched. Call police as soon as possible.
- If the incident is not in progress but you wish to make a report of the graffiti, a report will be taken over the phone.

To report existing graffiti on any property (public or private), call or email the City of Arlington Police Department at 360-403-3400 or the non-emergency number: 425-407-3999. Send email to [police@arlingtonwa.gov](mailto:police@arlingtonwa.gov)

### REMOVE

If you are a victim of graffiti, it is important that you remove it as soon as possible - ideally within 48 hours (AMIC 9.28.050 Graffiti Nuisance).

- Rapid removal sends a clear message that defacing your property is not acceptable.
- Recurrence is significantly reduced.
- Removal products work best on newly applied graffiti.
- Rapid removal eliminates the public recognition sought by graffiti vandals.
- Rapid removal of graffiti keeps your property and neighborhood clean and attractive.

