



Graffiti Removal Paint-Out Logistics

Get the Facts

The removal of graffiti by painting over defaced public buildings and areas by volunteers will help restore target areas of public lands and neighborhoods to their original aesthetic quality.

Identify locations that require graffiti abatement and determine the removal method. Paint and solvent, or other cleaning solution, may be necessary to remove graffiti (including markers) from surfaces such as utility boxes, signs, etc.

Estimate the amount of manpower and the materials necessary to remove or paint over graffiti. Take a picture of the graffiti before it is removed. Photographs will assist law enforcement in their investigation. Do not use a community cleanup to remove gang graffiti.

Obtain written authorization from property owners prior to the cleanup. Contact information for owners of vacated properties can often be obtained through a local real estate agent or public records. Graffiti cleanup on public property is typically the responsibility of the city.

Prioritize the Behaviors

Now that you've been a sustainable sleuth and gathered all your evidence. You need to identify what behaviors you'd like to change with your project.

What key message do you want to resonate most with attendees and participants?

You can consider the following actions:

1. How is this community adversely affected by graffiti?
2. Will your removal project improve these issues in the short and long term?



Develop & Implement Action Plan

Avoid the Patchwork Effect

Removing graffiti by painting new random square blocks provides graffiti writers with a new, bright canvas. Improper paint selection may also lead to bleed-through of graffiti due to poor durability. When painting over graffiti, colors match the paint to the original surface color. If this cannot be done, repaint the entire surface. If limited by time and/or paint, paint the entire surface from ground level up to a certain height (making sure that the line of paint is clean and straight).

Prepare the Surface

Painting over a surface that is not properly prepared may lead to peeling and cracking of paint. Ensure appropriate surface preparation before painting over any graffiti:

- Clean the surface of any dust, dirt, grease, or oils.
- Apply paint only to a dry surface.
- Make sure the surface is dull. To achieve this, sanding may be necessary.
- Ensure the surface is sound before painting over it. Check for cracks, rust, water damage, or other signs that indicate the surface is in poor condition.

Select the Right Paint

Poor paint selection and repeated paint-outs have the potential to cause surface damage, allowing for structural deterioration. When painting over surfaces like wood, concrete, block wall, and brick choose "breathable" paint, such as acrylic latex (e.g., paint manufactured so that moisture can pass through the product and escape from inside the surface).

Multiple coats of paint on the same area can also prevent surface pores from breathing, causing structural and maintenance problems. Painting over a surface that already has several coats of paint may require using a pressure washer

http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=graffiti_resources or scraping and sanding to properly prepare it for a new coat of paint. Consider applying a protective coating

http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=graffiti_resources to prevent the need for repainting.

To select the most appropriate paint for a particular surface, and to learn how to best prepare a surface, visit with a professional at your local paint store.

Ensure Proper Cleanup

Remember to use a drop cloth when painting to avoid dripping large amounts of paint on the sidewalk and other areas around the site. Also, promptly clean, or properly dispose of equipment such as cleaning brushes, rollers, and buckets.

It is often illegal and always environmentally irresponsible to allow dirty water into the sewer systems or into the soil. Disposal method(s) will likely vary depending on the amount and type of material requiring disposal (water, water and other materials, paint, etc.). Check with local environmental or solid waste services about disposal options and be sure to read the product label recommendations for disposal.

For more removal information and personal safety guidelines, visit Graffiti Hurts at http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=graffiti_resources.

Tools and Safety Equipment

The type of tools and safety equipment you may select to use will vary depending on the type of surface you are cleaning. If you are unsure of what types of tools and safety equipment is needed, please ask for assistance at your local hardware, paint, or home improvement store.

Some suggested tools include:

- Power washer
- Solvents
- Paint brushes (if you're not sure what type of brush to use please ask for assistance at your local hardware, paint, or home improvement store)
- Paint roller frames
- Paint roller cover (remember to get the proper roller cover for the project)
- Roller extension poles
- Roller trays, or 5-gallon buckets with screens
- 5-gallon buckets for water
- Masking tape
- Drop cloths
- Ladders
- Rags/paper towels
- Paint can opener

Safety equipment:

- Gloves (latex/vinyl gloves are inexpensive and work well for painting)
- Goggles (especially when volunteers will be painting over their head)

Evaluate Impacts

Volunteer groups will be responsible for keeping track of improvement metrics to be included in your report.

How will you measure the behavior change impacts and specific community improvements?

- **Results Worksheet**
- **Reporting Instructions**

Provide Feedback

- Say “Thank You”
- What’s the most successful and what can be improved upon?
- Who should be consulted on this step?
- How do you communicate that to community leaders and stakeholders?