

Taking Action Against Graffiti

DCI is committed to providing a clean, vibrant, safe and welcoming downtown for all residents, workers and visitors.

As a part of this commitment DCI has created a Graffiti program.

Graffiti's Impact on Community

Graffiti if left unchecked,

- Diverts dollars from the delivery of other DCI services
- Destroys property and reduces property values
- Undermines residents and visitors sense of security and safety
- Promotes an undesirable image of our city to visitors
- Looks as if "nobody cares" about the area and as such have given that area over to vandals..



DCI's Graffiti program goals

To reduce the prevalence of graffiti in the BIA through a coherent set of initiatives while simultaneously strengthening our community capacity, and increasing civic responsibility...

- To remove graffiti as quickly as possible as a deterrent;
- To encourage preventative techniques as a deterrent to graffiti;
- To involve the business community and individual residents as partners in reducing graffiti;
- To ensure a good understanding of the factors that motivate individuals to commit illegal activities and anti-social behaviours;
- To ensure police services necessary for discouraging and responding to graffiti incidents are in place

Our Approach to Graffiti Management

A community approach has been put into place, recognizing that graffiti occurs on a range of public and private property and affects the whole community; managing graffiti is most effective when all stakeholders participate and a multi-faceted approach is applied.

What is Graffiti?

Drawings or writing that is scratched, painted, or sprayed on walls or other surfaces in public places or on private property without the permission of the property owner.

Tagging - a signature or identifying symbol used by a graffiti artist

Graffiti is writing, drawing, or symbols applied to any surface without the permission of the property owner.

To create graffiti, vandals use a variety of materials, such as automotive car paint, spray paint, crayons and permanent markers. Etching surfaces is another way vandals destroy property.

Graffiti can occur anywhere, however, some of the more popular targets include:

- buildings both public and private
- Canada Post mailboxes
- Maritime Electric boxes
- Parkades



Graffiti is an act of vandalism that places a significant burden on private and public budgets. Graffiti may also cause local property values to decrease and can result in a heightened fear of crime in the community.

Graffiti or Art ?

Art is a creative and productive form of expression applied to properties where permission was granted. Graffiti is a crime.

Graffiti on My Property

If graffiti occurs on your privately-owned property, the incident should be reported to the police and then removed as soon as possible. If graffiti is left for weeks or months on end then you've given over that space to the vandal. DCI has contracted Island Sandblasting – 8924476 to remove graffiti in the area. They use both sandblasting and the less destructive sodablasing for more sensitive surfaces.

Graffiti in Progress is a crime in progress - call 911 immediately.

Graffiti on Private Property - property owners can file a Property Damage Report with Police at 629-4172

The longer graffiti is displayed, the more likely additional graffiti will occur, or spread to nearby sites.

Tips for Removing Graffiti:

- Paint over graffiti with latex paint - it's the easiest, cheapest and fastest removal method.
- Use a sealant or blocker as a primer to prevent graffiti from leaching through the finish coat.
- Paint in regular, block patches, often it's not necessary to paint the entire surface.
- Use at least two coats of paint.
- Colour Your World carry a product called 504 Graffiti remover which has been found to work very well. It will remove the graffiti without destroying the material it's painted on.

Graffiti can be deterred by:

- restricting access to walls by planting ivy and/or thorny bushes
- increasing lighting and visibility in vulnerable areas
- installing video surveillance to monitor isolated areas
- establishing strong **Neighbourhood Watch** and **CityWatch** programs

DCI Graffiti Management Plan

On June 1 2006 DCI began a Graffiti removal program. A company was hired to seek out and create a list of the most prominent graffiti on building facades within the BIA. The owners of the indicated properties were contacted and asked to sign a waiver which would allow DCI to have the graffiti removed from their property. At the same time a letter was sent, from the City Revitalization Chair to Maritime Electric, Canada Post and Aliant to ask that they take it upon themselves to remove graffiti and maintain their property.

In 2006 DCI cleaned/removed 45 incidents of Graffiti.

Graffiti and the Media

The media can be powerful partners in educating residents and spreading awareness about graffiti and how to reduce it.

We ask that you partner in our efforts to reduce graffiti in the BIA by observing some of the tips below when reporting on graffiti:

- Always stress that graffiti is not a “victimless” crime. Tax and private dollars are spent on cleanups. It contributes to citizens’ unease about the security and safety of neighborhoods, and can hurt business because customers may shop elsewhere.
- Avoid showing graffiti as it only gives more fame to the person who did it. If graffiti must be shown, only use one small unrecognizable area, or ensure the background of graffiti be slightly out-of-focus to distort any tags. It can also be photographed at an angle that makes it illegible.
- Never mention vandals by their tag names in stories again it gives them media credit for their work.
- Do not refer to the graffiti writer as an “artist”.

DCI does not advertise the Graffiti removal program or submit press releases on our accomplishments as we do not want to start a “paint it up” – “clean it up” competition with these vandals.

For more information on the DCI Graffiti Removal Program, please contact:

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Cost of Graffiti to Charlottetown

Economic Cost

- Destroys property
- Reduces property values

Social Cost

- Diverts dollars from the delivery of other DCI services
- Promotes an undesirable image of our city to visitors
- Undermines residents and visitors sense of security and safety
- Looks as if "nobody cares" about the area

By removing graffiti quickly and consistently we are showing the pride we have in our community. By cleaning up existing graffiti, no matter how long it's been there, we are showing that we are "taking back" that area.

If you remove graffiti within...

- 24 hours - there is a 10% chance it will reappear.
 - 2 weeks - there is a 100% chance it will reappear.
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Graffiti Terminology

Tagging - style of calligraphy writing used as an identification mark.

throw-ups - "fat" bubble style outline of a word (usually a tag name) drawn quickly.

political or social comments - slogans used to signal concern about particular issues.

piece - generally a more complex work involving some form of "artistry". They are usually a highly stylized and colorful version of a tag or crew name.

etching - scratching of a surface through use of rock, etching tools and/or sharp objects.



Contact Us

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**Report Graffiti on
Private Property or Graffiti in Progress
To Charlottetown City Police 629-4172**



