

FACT SHEET

If you see someone placing graffiti on property call the police on 000. Placing graffiti on someone else's private property without their permission is a criminal offence.

The information contained in this fact sheet provides guidelines on how to deal with graffiti and how you can help Council keep your property and our city free of graffiti.

Types of Graffiti

Tagging - The name given to words or numbers that are the calligraphic signature of individuals or groups of graffiti writers.

Political/Social Comment - Slogans used to advertise issues of concern.

Graffiti Art - Illustrations in graffiti style painted on large surfaces.

Stencilling - Pre-formatted template design sprayed onto a wall.

Examples of graffiti:

Tagging



Graffiti art



Stencilling



Current Council Initiatives:

Council has taken a positive lead with its graffiti prevention program by:

- Quickly removing graffiti from its own buildings and infrastructure.
- Working closely with electricity suppliers, transport owners and operators and State Government agencies to encourage them to apply the same level of vigilance to remove graffiti tagging from their assets.
- Community education, information and support for property owners and managers about their responsibilities under the Activities Local Law for removing graffiti.

Who is responsible for removal?

On Council Property:

The City of Melbourne is directly responsible for removing graffiti from infrastructure managed or owned by Council. This includes roads, footpaths, street furniture, sculptures, artworks, bridges and its buildings. Council removes graffiti on its own property as soon as possible based on a policy of rapid response.

On Private Property:

Under the Activities Local Law, private property owners /managers / occupiers are responsible for removing graffiti on their property. The local law outlines enforcement action, including the provision to fine a property owner, manager or occupier if graffiti is not removed from a building when directed to do so by an Authorised Officer.

Where graffiti is considered offensive and/or of a political/religious nature, Council resources may be used to assist with the removal, if the property owners fail to act immediately.

Only through local community support and individuals taking responsibility for their property can graffiti be successfully reduced. As the images below show, when the property owner takes responsibility and paints out graffiti on their property, the visual amenity is considerably improved.

Wall covered in graffiti



After painting



Prevention

The following may deter graffiti on your property

- Use creepers and foliage or trellis along a wall
- Paint in dark colours.
- Keeping your property well maintained.
- Ensuring the site is well-lit at night.

When building and/or revitalising the façade of a building consider using an anti-graffiti coating, to prevent attachment or to assist in removal.

Removal Tips

Two main options are available to remove graffiti from your property are: **liquid removal** or **painting out**.

High-pressure sand or water blasting may be required for extensive graffiti as a last resort, if the surface is structurally sound.

For the most effective results, graffiti should be removed as soon as possible after the incident.

- There is less time for the graffiti to bleed or burn into the surface material, making removal easier
- It reduces the exposure for the graffitist's work.

Most materials can be found at hardware stores. Always follow the safety procedures recommended by the manufacturer. For further technical assistance, please seek advice from your hardware store or graffiti removal specialist.

Liquid Removal

For painted and protected surfaces, such as wood, metal or concrete surfaces that have a topcoat.

- Use a common solvent, appropriate commercial remover or citrus oil based product.
- Always test a small area to start with, and gradually increase intensity, starting with detergent, citrus oil, methylated spirits, turpentine or white spirit and finally acetone.

For bare or raw surfaces, such as stone, concrete, brick, wood and metal.

- Apply a solvent remover or paint stripper, wait three to five minutes then use a wire brush, rinsing with water to remove the graffiti residue.

For glass, plastics, and other synthetics.

- Most graffiti removers will work well on glass or a blade scraper may be effective.
- Do not use caustic cleaners for glass or aluminium. Greater care needs to be taken with plastics and other synthetics. Consult a glazier or hardware store if necessary.

Painting over graffiti

- First, clean the surface well to remove as much of the graffiti as possible.
- Aim for the closest match possible to the original paint or surface finish or paint the entire area in a darker colour to the nearest architectural break to deter a recurrence of graffiti.
- Some cases may need a sealer applied and then paint to ensure complete coverage of the graffiti.

Coatings are also available to prevent graffiti from penetrating the surface. Please check with your local paint shop or graffiti removal specialist on products appropriate for your property.

Graffiti Removal Incentive Program

Free Paint Voucher or Graffiti Removal Kit.

The Council is currently offering you the choice of a Dulux paint voucher or removal kit to clean your property of graffiti.

The paint voucher is redeemable for 1 or 4 litres of paint at the Dulux Trade Centre, 420 King Street, West Melbourne. Colour matching will be available and should be used to ensure the best finish.

Dulux offers a free product specification service for heritage-affected buildings. This service includes all surfaces included in your project.

Removal kits include removal fluid, gloves, cloth, apron, protective glasses, scrubbing mitt and brush and are available directly from the Town Hall. Carefully read the instructions provided in the kit before use.

Delivery of removal kits and paint is available free of charge.

To determine which product will work best to remove graffiti on your property surface type please read the tips in this Fact Sheet.

The Program conditions are:

1. The property must be in the municipality
2. The property must currently have graffiti
3. Graffiti must be removed within 28 days of approval

To obtain more information or an application form please call the Hotline on 9658 9658 or download from www.melbourne.vic.gov.au.