

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## G.A.K. (Graffiti Action Kit) Instructions

### HOW DOES GRAFFITI HARM A COMMUNITY?

The negative impacts of graffiti vandalism have far-reaching effects on the quality of life within a community.

The *broken window theory* draws a connection between the appearance of graffiti and unkempt neighborhoods with the escalation of more serious crimes. Graffiti sends the signal that nobody cares, and can attract other forms of crime to neighborhoods. A community's sense of ownership may be replaced with feelings of fear, anxiety, and frustration.

### WHAT CAN THE COMMUNITY DO?

Residents can take back their neighborhoods by helping to clean up graffiti. We encourage you to do as much or as little as you want. **Any effort to remove graffiti makes a BIG difference!**

**Be persistent!** Repeat removal will likely be needed, as vandals may try again. However, studies show that the sooner graffiti is removed; the less likely it will be repeated in the same place. If you consistently remove graffiti within 24-48 hours, vandals may realize graffiti is no longer tolerated in that area and will move on.

**The Graffiti Action Program is here to help!** Call the Graffiti Hotline 24/7, to report graffiti or ask questions.

### Tips When Painting Over Graffiti

Graffiti may be unattractive, but ineffective paint-overs can be just as unsightly!

- ☑ **Consider the long-term benefits of repainting** an entire surface. Save enough paint for touch-ups later. The next time the surface is vandalized, the touch-up job will blend in perfectly.
- ☑ **Avoid painting surfaces more than five times** - this prevents the surface from breathing, which can cause long-term deterioration of the structure. After 5 coats, strip the paint before painting again.
- ☑ **Avoid painting unpainted masonry surfaces** (for example: brick, stucco, marble). Call the Graffiti Hotline at 385-8010 for information about proper removal.
- ☑ **Properly dispose of unusable paint** according to the City's recycling guidelines. Empty dry paint containers can be placed in the trash. If they are completely empty and rinsed out, they can be placed in the recycle bin.

### IN YOUR GRAFFITI ACTION KIT (G.A.K.)

**Your G.A.K. provides the basic tools necessary to help safely remove graffiti in your neighborhood.**

Safety gear, like goggles and latex gloves, should be worn when using graffiti removal chemicals. Please read all product safety instructions before using any materials in your G.A.K. bucket.

The *Graffiti Removal Towel Wipes* work best to remove markings on aluminum siding, glass, stainless steel, ceramic tile, and traffic signs.

The *Graffiti Removal Spray* should be used with a rag or brush, to clean bathroom walls and stall, metal surfaces, and some rough surfaces such as brick and concrete.

Sometimes, removal efforts can leave surfaces looking as bad - or worse - than before removal; we recommend testing a small area first.

### PERSONAL SAFETY:

- ☑ **Read packaging carefully** before handling chemicals.
- ☑ **Wear rubber or latex gloves**, and proper clothing and shoes (no sandals). Skin protection is always needed. Solvent-based graffiti removers have defatting properties that may cause dermatitis.
- ☑ **Wear safety goggles** when using chemicals or when working on any overhead surface. To prevent inhalation of vapors, wear a respirator mask.
- ☑ **Follow product storage instructions carefully.** Store chemicals away from heat and flames.
- ☑ **Be aware of your surroundings.** Watch for traffic. Use care when climbing around fences, buildings, etc.
- ☑ **Do not remove graffiti after dark.**
- ☑ **Do not confront graffiti vandals.** Call 9-1-1 to report graffiti in progress. Residents who have information that may aid in the arrest of a graffiti vandal can call Crime Stoppers at 385-8255, where anonymous tips may result in rewards of up to \$1000.

When in doubt, call the Graffiti Hotline at 385-8010 for assistance!

Thank you for making a personal commitment in your neighborhood.

Your time and efforts are appreciated!