

# Working Together for a Graffiti-Free Ottawa

Ottawa's Graffiti Management Strategy

PREVENT IT.  
REPORT IT.  
REMOVE IT.

**GRAFFITI**

PRÉVENIR.  
SIGNALER.  
ÉLIMINER.



[ottawa.ca/graffiti](http://ottawa.ca/graffiti)

[ottawa.ca/gestiondesgraffiti](http://ottawa.ca/gestiondesgraffiti)

# What is graffiti?



- Graffiti is one or more letters, symbols, etchings, figures, inscriptions, stains
- It is against the law.

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# Graffiti Styles

- **Tag** – a personal signature usually made up of 2 to 3 letters. 85% are tags
- **Throw-Up** - larger than the tag. It is comprised of bubble or balloon style letters utilizing one or two colours.
- **Masterpiece** - (piece) also known as 'wildstyle'. It consists of interlocking letters and arrows, uses multiple colours and is the hardest style to master. A large masterpiece can take several hours or even days to complete
- **Gang Related** – gang related graffiti is rare in Ottawa

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# Profile of a 'Tagger'

- Graffiti Writers or 'Taggers' come from a variety of different cultural and economic backgrounds
- They are predominantly males in their early teens to mid-twenties
- They share a common desire for fame and recognition within the graffiti sub-culture.
- **"Get Up"** The greatest fame goes to the taggers with the most numerous, long lasting and difficult tags
- **"Keep it Real"** Keep it illegal, taggers thrive on the adrenaline rush of the risk involved when doing it illegally

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# Impacts of Graffiti on our Community

- Left unchecked, graffiti spreads rapidly, leads to 'broken window' syndrome.
- People think nobody cares... nobody's in control.
- Decreases aesthetic appeal
- Discourages business and shopping, and leads to lost business revenue.
- Poses threat, and in some cases, causes fear.
- Can lead to other forms of crime/vandalism
- Costs millions of dollars for removal

***In 2012, over 40,300 pieces of graffiti were removed from city property at a cost of \$1.6 million.***

***All geographic areas of Ottawa are affected by graffiti.***

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# Goals of the Graffiti Management Strategy

- A clean, safe and beautiful city with a reduction in overall visible graffiti
- Greater community pride and economic prosperity for residents and businesses
- Encourage civic pride and participation in graffiti reduction
- Engage multiple stakeholders to maximize benefits

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# The 4 E's of Graffiti

- **Education**
  - Building awareness about how to prevent and remove graffiti
- **Eradication**
  - Removing graffiti quickly and efficiently
- **Empowerment**
  - Maximizing available resources and relationships
- **Enforcement**
  - Applying municipal, provincial and criminal code laws when necessary

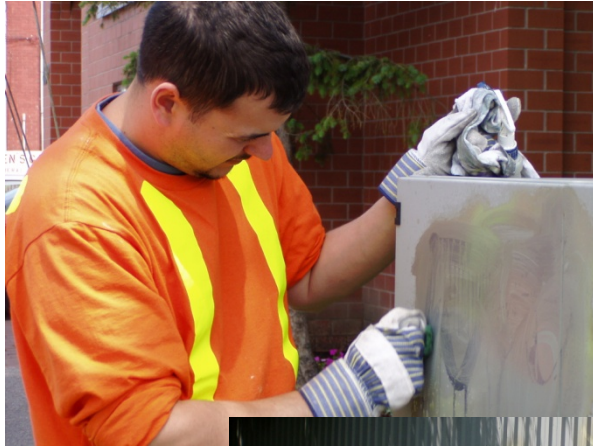
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# 4 E's - Eradication



- The City is committed to keeping city assets graffiti-free
- Prompt removal is the most direct method of dealing with graffiti
- City policies for Zero Tolerance Zones and 24-hour removal of hate/offensive graffiti

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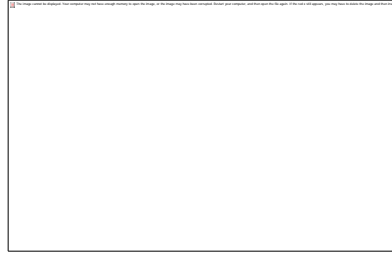
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# *4 E's - Enforcement*

## **Graffiti and the Law**



- City of Ottawa Graffiti Management By-law 2008-1
- Youth Criminal Justice Act
- Parental Responsibility Act
- Trespass to Property Act

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# 4 E's - Enforcement

## Graffiti Management By-law 2008-1

### What the by-law states regarding vandals:

- No person shall place or cause or permit graffiti to be placed on property
- Potential fine of \$615 (including victim surcharge)

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# 4 E's - Enforcement

## Graffiti Management By-law 2008-1

### What the by-law states regarding property owners:

- Property owners whose property has been subjected to graffiti may be given written notice requiring removal of the graffiti within a time period specified in a notice but no less than 7 days
- Graffiti not being removed within the specified time period could result in the City removing the graffiti and recovering the costs through the tax roll
- The by-law does not apply to mural signs and legal graffiti walls

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# 4 E's – Empowerment

The City and Ottawa Police Service work together to empower all parties to reduce graffiti occurrence by:

- Directing vandals to diversion and restitution programs
- Encouraging community involvement through volunteer and other programs
- Working together with a broad range of community partners

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# Mural Program



- Engage youth-at-risk
- Graffiti prevention
- Beautification
- Community engagement
- Funding: “Paint It Up Program” through Crime Prevention Ottawa and the City.



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# Prevent It

- Deter graffiti vandals and prevent graffiti from occurring or recurring on property.
  - Remove any graffiti as soon as it appears.
  - Keep property clean and neat.
  - Plant vines, shrubs or thorny plants to limit access to walls.
  - Move vehicles, dumpsters and other items away from walls to prevent access to the roof.
  - Apply a special coating to protect surfaces from potential damage caused by graffiti removal.

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# ....Prevent It

- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
  - Avoid large, smooth and light coloured surfaces.
  - Use fences and other barriers to discourage through traffic.
  - Plant hedges to block access to a fence
  - Trim hedges to increase sight lines
  - Work with community artists to commission a mural on a persistently targeted wall.

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# Prevent It

2007



2012



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**Ottawa**

# Report It

- **To report existing graffiti on any property (public or private)**
  - online at [ottawa.ca/graffiti](http://ottawa.ca/graffiti)
  - call 3-1-1
- **If you actually see graffiti vandalism occurring:**
  - call 9-1-1
  - It is considered a crime in progress.
- **If your property has been vandalized with graffiti:**
  - File a police report by calling the Ottawa Police Service Call Centre at 613-236-1222, ext. 7300
  - Remove it from your property as soon as possible.

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# Remove It

- Remove it as soon as possible - ideally within 48 to 72 hours.
- Sends a clear message that defacing property is not acceptable
- Rapid removal eliminates the public recognition sought by graffiti vandals
- Rapid removal of graffiti keeps property and neighbourhoods clean
- Removal products work best on newly applied graffiti

# 4 E's – Empowerment Community Action

- Adopt-A-Road/Park
- Spring and Fall Cleaning the Capital
- Community Graffiti Removal Kit
- Neighbourhood / Business Watch Program to monitor and report graffiti



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# 4 E's – Empowerment

## Public Art

- Public art contributes to community pride and beautification
- Graffiti is not art.
- The City encourages residents to make responsible choices when placing art in public areas
- To support artists and creative expression:
  - Legal graffiti walls
  - community art programs
  - mural opportunities ([www.ottawa.ca/mural](http://www.ottawa.ca/mural))

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# 4 E's - Education

- Brochures
- Magnets
- Community Information Workshops
  - schools, youth groups, community associations, homeowners, business groups

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# 4 E's - Education

*Ottawa.ca/graffiti*

- Tips for preventing graffiti
- Guidelines for effective graffiti removal
- Tips for parents and teachers who are suspicious of youth being involved in graffiti
- On-line reporting of graffiti
- Mural Program

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# For More Information:

## Websites:

- [ottawa.ca/graffiti](http://ottawa.ca/graffiti)
- [ottawapolice.ca](http://ottawapolice.ca)

## Phone:

- 3-1-1

## E-mail:

- [graffitimanagement@ottawa.ca](mailto:graffitimanagement@ottawa.ca)

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