

Graffiti can be beaten

by Maria Spierto

Nothing detracts from the aesthetic appeal of a building more than graffiti; expelling feelings of fury and violation. Condo and property owners have spent far too much time, energy and money waging war against this form of vandalism. There are some new strategies:

Don't go it alone — help is within reach

You don't have to paint over unsightly graffiti or the unsuccessful cover-up attempts by staff members, who unfortunately have been armed with the wrong product and knowledge. You didn't want to paint that wall in the first place — and you may not have to paint it. The cost of professional graffiti removal services are within your budget, and much less costly than you suspect. Most often, professional graffiti removal services are less expensive than handling the problem in-house and produce better results.

Identification

Proper identification of surface type and paint content are keys to successful graffiti removal. These identifiers determine the best product and the best process to combat the problem. There are many over-the-counter products on the market but seldom are they effective. Don't use over-the-counter medicine when a prescription is necessary. Professionals are trained to identify key factors, and have applying experience and training to create superior results.

The right product — the right process

The best product for the job, placed in the wrong hands (and vice versa) could spell disaster! Improper use of

acids may etch the surface, leaving a permanent stain that looks just as bad as the graffiti. Thinners and acetones can separate the components of paint, driving the dyes deeper into porous surfaces.

Sandblasting can permanently discolor, deteriorate and significantly damage masonry substrates. A professional graffiti removal service identifies the surface, determines the best product for the job, and what's more, on most surfaces, is able to use a product that knows the difference between paint and dirt. Thus, you don't end up with a "clean spot" where the graffiti once was.

The best medicine: Act fast

Graffiti is an urgent matter. The reasons are several. First, graffiti breeds graffiti. Allowing graffiti to exist on exterior facades invites and encourages future acts of vandalism. Second, the longer paint is permitted to linger on the surface, the deeper it is absorbed into its pores. Graffiti removed within 48 hours is far less likely to leave traces of shadows or outlines than graffiti that has been present for a long time. Additionally, the cost of professional graffiti removal may be greatly reduced by immediate response to the problem. The shorter the dwell time of paint on the surface, the less labor and material expended on the removal. Responding within 24 hours can potentially cut the cost in half when compared to the cost of removing the same graffiti that has remained on the surface for a week or more.

The best defense: a coat of armor

Some surfaces act exceptionally favorable to the application of a surface coating especially designed to keep graffiti under control. Once applied, your own staff members simply brush on mineral spirits and rinse thoroughly with a garden hose anytime graffiti rears its ugly head.

Graffiti that is kept under control aids

in maintaining the beauty and value of your property. Furthermore, prevention and dissuasion of graffiti attacks portray a sense that yours is a secure building, sending a message that vandalism will not be tolerated.

Professionals can help maintain the high standards of your property at a price you can afford.

MARIA SPIERTO IS A PRINCIPAL OF LAND-MARK EXTERIOR RESTORATION IN LEXINGTON, MA.



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