

## Dealing with Graffiti

Sentry Management recommends these steps for dealing with graffiti:

- If you happen to see someone defacing property, don't try to stop it yourself. Call the police immediately and report vandalism in progress. Make a mental note of as many details as possible about the perpetrators—how many, what age, male or female, distinctive clothing, that will help the police.
- Encourage your neighbors to do the same – watch for and report graffiti vandals.
- When graffiti appears on your property, photograph it before removing it. Record when and where it appeared, when it was removed, the cost and other relevant information. Share your documentation with the police and insurance agent.
- Remove graffiti immediately. “Taggers” gain more notoriety the longer the graffiti remains. Removing it quickly sends a message that you care about your community.
- Install good lighting in areas vulnerable to graffiti.
- Plant shrubs or climbing vines in graffiti-prone areas. Or, replace walls with hedges.
- In problem areas where graffiti reappears regularly, try applying a layer of clear paint or silicone coating over painted surfaces or visit your local paint store and ask for the most recent products on the market for this purpose that will keep stucco, brick, wood and other surfaces more resistant to the effects of spray paint. This will make cleaning future graffiti much easier.

Working together can reduce this problem in your community. Use your Community Watch Committee or provide a place on your website for neighbors to log in and leave information. Post information so neighbors will be aware and on the lookout when they are out and about in the community. Functioning as a community will help keep problems such as graffiti to a minimum and your neighborhood looking great.