

Graffiti/Tagging

This is your community. We need the citizens and business owners to take an active role in helping law enforcement put an end to graffiti. We rely on you to be our eyes and ears in the neighborhoods. No one knows your neighborhood better than you, because you live and work there. If the police are not made aware of the problems, then we can't help fix them.



Property crimes in Virginia cost citizens and business owners millions of dollars each year. When you choose to destroy someone's personal property, you have committed a crime. The person who suffers the damage or loss of property is a victim under the law and deserves to have those responsible charged with a crime.

Destruction of Property: 18.2-137. It is a Class 3 misdemeanor to unlawfully destroy, deface, damage or remove without the intent to steal any property, real or personal, not one's own. If such injury was caused intentionally, it is a Class 1 misdemeanor if the value of or damage to the property is less than \$1,000 and a Class 6 felony if the value of or damage to the property is \$1,000 or more.

Reporting Graffiti

The City of Falls Church takes graffiti very seriously. If you see, have seen or know someone that has engaged in graffiti, contact the Falls Church Police Department. We need the community's help to stop the spread of graffiti and the deterioration of the City.

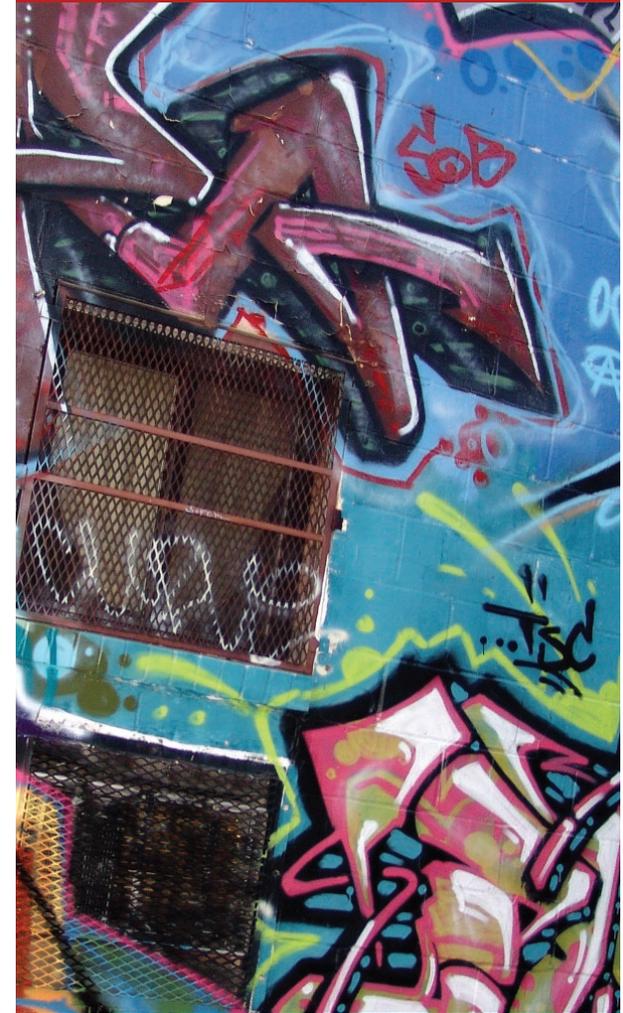
If you see someone actively doing graffiti, dial 911. Get a detailed description of the subject to include: height, weight, age, race and clothing. If they are in a vehicle, attempt to get the vehicle tag and state of registration, also vehicle make, model and distinguishing features. Give all this information to the dispatcher so officers know who they are looking for.

If you want to report someone for graffiti anonymously, you can contact The Falls Church Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS. Callers do not have to give their names, just the information. **A CASH REWARD OF UP TO \$1000.00** will be paid for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the suspect(s). Anonymity is always assured.



Falls Church Crime Solvers
1-866-411-TIPS

Graffiti **ABATEMENT** Program



City of Falls Church
Police Department
Graffiti Abatement Program
(703) 248-5100 ext. 7065



Graffiti/Tagging

Graffiti is referred to as an urban style of art. This would be an acceptable art if the subject painting it got permission from the property owner.

Gang Graffiti is used to mark territory or used for recruiting for the gang. The gangs name is usually sprayed on private property with the gangs colors.

Tagging is not an art form or about expressing oneself. It is vandalism and the destruction of property. Tagging is any unauthorized marking, etching, scratching, drawing, painting or defacing of any property not belonging to them.

When someone defaces another person's property without their permission it has now become destruction of property. Destruction of property can be a misdemeanor or felony under the criminal code of Virginia, depending on the value of the damage caused. It could be punished by a fine and/or jail time. The subject will be charged for each location the Graffiti/ Tagging is located.

Graffiti/Tagging is an eyesore on the community resulting in a threat to the quality of life, economic losses for businesses, and can lead to the deterioration of the area in which you live or work. The removal of Graffiti/Tagging is a drain on the City's resources in both cost and manpower.



Is my son/daughter tagging?

Tagging is not an inner-city problem. Tagging is not isolated to a certain racial, economical, or social background. Tagging is being done here in the City and by juveniles who live here. Here are some signs to look for to determine if your child may be tagging:

- Your child has a large amount of markers in different sizes and colors, spray paint cans or shoe polish containers
- Your child wears baggy clothes and carries a backpack when going out at night. This is to carry the markers, spray paint and camera to photograph the tagging
- The clothes your child wears has paint or marker stains on them or their fingertips are frequently stained with paint or markers
- Your child has Tagging written on their clothes, backpacks, baseball caps, school books, shoes or on furniture and walls in their room
- The Tagging you see from their clothes or in their room is written on public and private property in your neighborhood or surrounding communities
- Your child is being deceitful and cannot explain why they are in possession of the before mentioned items
- Your child visits Tagging websites on the computer, has magazines about Graffiti/Tagging, or has photographs of Tagging in their bedroom
- Your child associates with people displaying these traits or people who have been arrested for this before

These are some general traits displayed by people involved in Tagging. If your child is displaying two or more of these traits, they are probably involved in Tagging. You should confront them about this and if you believe your child is involved, please contact the Falls Church Police Department.



Graffiti Removal

The key to controlling graffiti is its removal. It has been documented that the quicker the graffiti is removed the less likely more will appear.

RECOGNIZE: Be aware of graffiti occurring in your neighborhood.

REPORT: Contact the Falls Church Police Department at 703-241-5053 so a report can be taken

RECORD: The graffiti will be photographed by the police for documentation and as evidence for prosecution

REMOVE: The final and most important step, the removal. The City's Department of Environmental Services will remove the graffiti from public property. It is the responsibility of the home/business owner to remove the graffiti from private property. The City asks that all graffiti be removed in 10 days from the time you are notified by law enforcement.