

Graffiti Removal Policy Township of Springwater

Approved: November 2, 2009
Effective: November 2, 2009
Next Review: May 2, 2010

Department: Public Works, Parks
and Recreation
Subject: Graffiti
Policy Number: A09 GR

A. Authority

The authority for the Graffiti Removal Policy shall be by the approval of the Township of Springwater Council.

B. Policy Statement

The Township of Springwater is committed to providing a community that is safe, healthy, livable and welcoming to all residents and visitors. Graffiti is a crime that often invites more graffiti and puts into question the perceived physical and social order of the community. If left unattended or unmanaged, graffiti will give the impression that nobody cares and can encourage other types of antisocial behavior.

The Township of Springwater is committed to the timely removal of graffiti on Township property, conditional to any permits required (i.e. NVCA for under bridge works) and weather conditions.

This policy aims to set an example for businesses and home owners about the importance of removing visible graffiti from their properties.

C. Definitions

“Council” means the Council for the Corporation of the Township of Springwater.

“Graffiti” means one or more letters, symbols, marks, etchings, pictorial representations, messages or slogans, howsoever made, that disfigures or defaces a property, but does not include any of the following:

- a. a sign, public notice or traffic control mark authorized by the Township;
- b. a sign authorized pursuant to a permit issued under the Township Signs and Advertising Devices Regulations By-law (By-law No. 2009-055);
- c. a sign, public notice, or traffic control mark authorized by the County of Simcoe, Provincial or Federal law; and
- d. letters, symbols, marks, pictorial representation, messages or slogans however made on Township property that is authorized by the Township.

“NVCA” means the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

“Offender” means an individual or group of individuals who have been charged with an offence by the police for causing graffiti on public property.

“Parks and Recreation Department” means the Parks and Recreation Department of the Township of Springwater.

“Police” means the Huronia West Ontario Provincial Police.

“Public Works Department” means the Public Works Department of the Township of Springwater.

“Township” means the Corporation of the Township of Springwater.

“Township Property” means any property building, structure, facility, infrastructure, or sign owned or operated by the Township.

D. Purpose

The purpose of the Graffiti Removal Policy is to remove graffiti from Township property as soon as reasonably possible.

Leaving property ‘tagged’ gives vandals a sense of ownership of the structure they have marked. Speedy removal of the graffiti removes this sense of ownership the vandals were hoping for. Graffiti is illegal and hurts the communities of the Township.

E. Scope

This policy applies to Township owned or operated facilities, buildings, signs and property that may become tagged by graffiti.

Note: Township skateboard parks are exempt as graffiti is authorized on these structures. Hateful, racist and obscene graffiti will be removed as outlined below.

F. Procedures for the Graffiti Removal Policy

Locating Graffiti

Upon locating graffiti on Township property, Township employees or members of the public may contact the Public Works Department to formally report where the graffiti was sited (identify site, building, description, nearest intersection etc.).

The Public Works Department will visit the site and take photographic evidence of the graffiti. These photographs will be forwarded to the police for their investigation.

If graffiti vandalism is seen in progress, the police are to be notified immediately.

Graffiti Removal

Recorded graffiti will be removed as soon as possible as follows below:

- a. Hateful, racist and obscene graffiti will be removed within one business day after it has been reported.
- b. Graffiti on high profile areas and assets will be removed within five business days after it has been reported.
- c. All other graffiti will be removed as soon as staff and assets are available.

The works involved in the removal of graffiti will be conditional to any required permits (i.e. NVCA for under bridge works) and weather conditions.

The removal of the graffiti will be carried out by Township staff unless there is a need for external contractors due to the surface or product used for the graffiti.

Department Responsibilities

The Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments will coordinate efforts to remove graffiti from areas within their departments:

- The Parks and Recreation Department will be responsible for removing graffiti from Township buildings and facilities.
- The Public Works Department will be responsible for the removal of graffiti from Township infrastructure (bridges, street lights etc.) and public works buildings (pump houses etc.).

Reimbursement

The removal of graffiti can be a costly endeavor and can drain municipal resources that could have been used for other services. When possible, the Township will try to recover the costs associated with removing graffiti.

Estimates or the cost of damage may be compiled in a timely fashion and forwarded to the police to the attention of the investigating officer of each incident (or act of graffiti) with a copy being kept on file with the Township for future use. The copy forwarded to the Police will include a request for reimbursement for damages done by the offender to be included in the Court Crown brief and presented to the Court.

The Township may also choose to sue the Offender for damages.

G. General

This Policy shall be administered by the Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments with assistance from the police.

This Policy shall be referred to as the 'Graffiti Removal Policy'.

This Policy shall come into force and effect on the day of passage.

This Policy shall be reviewed six months after the day of passage to review the Township's effectiveness of meeting the graffiti removal targets.