

making your neighborhood crime  
resistant...

## **Create a Graffiti Free Zone!**

### ***Reduce blight and nuisance activity.***

Often, graffiti is one of several types of “blight” in a neighborhood that combine to make a neighborhood more vulnerable to vandalism and other crimes. Be sure to report any bulky items, illegal dumping, littering, loitering, public drinking and other nuisances to our office or to the City by calling **3-1-1**.

### ***Install surveillance cameras.***

In many Council Districts, funds have been allocated for surveillance cameras throughout the district. These LAPD monitored cameras only view people in public places, and signs indicate that they are being watched. These cameras are operated and monitored by police officers from the police stations. Police officers use a joy stick to pan 360 degrees, tilt, and zoom in on hotspots.

### ***Join the police department’s volunteer surveillance team.***

Each of the police divisions in the City have a mechanism for involving community members in various types of “surveillance.” Contact the Senior Lead Officer (SLO) for your neighborhood to find out how you can be involved. Call your Council Office or check out the LAPD website to find out who the SLO for your area is. Some Police Divisions (ie. Northeast and Rampart Divisions) actually have formal volunteer surveillance units. To find out more about volunteer opportunities, you can call the Community Relations Desk at your division.

### ***Beautification and landscaping.***

If your site has a chronic graffiti problem, use landscaping to hide graffiti targets. Thorny plants and groundcover can control access to targets, and planting ivy or other vines against a building or wall is another good prevention technique. The one-time cost of planting trees, shrubs, vines and ground covers may be much less expensive than repeatedly removing or painting over graffiti. Plus, you get the added aesthetic benefits from landscape plantings. Yes, waiting for ivy to grow may take a long time. So, while waiting for the ivy to cover your wall, try using stencils to paint images of vines on the wall. The Los Angeles Conservation Corps Clean & Green Program provides free “vine stenciling” training for designated graffiti sites. If you are interested in this program, please contact the Clean & Green program at **(213) 747-1872** for more information.

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### ***Murals.***

Restoring murals and protecting them from graffiti is one of the most important steps in preserving an important part of the cultural heritage of Los Angeles. The first step is a preventative measure: as a part of the contract that any muralist signs with the city, she or he is required to apply an anti-graffiti coating. While there are several versions of this technology, the most often used coat is a wax layer that covers the mural. If the mural becomes defaced, the City's graffiti removal agencies will melt down the wax cover, which removes the graffiti without harming the mural, and then re-apply the coating. In order to get this cover, the individuals creating the mural can hire one of many private companies that provide this service or they may contact Operation Clean Sweep by calling 3-1-1. If a mural has been damaged or vandalized to the point where a community may want to consider removing the mural, they should either contact Operation Clean Sweep or the Council District's Field Office. For more information on mural protection and repair, please contact Operation Clean Sweep at (213) 978-0233.

### ***Additional Strategies.***

- ◆ If your graffiti hotspot is also a gang hotspot, or a hotspot for other crimes, and meets certain criteria, the police department can have their patrol cars monitor the location as well.
  
- ◆ Consider visiting the managers at hardware and art stores in your neighborhood and find out if they keep their spray cans locked up. Discuss with them the legal prohibition on selling spray cans to minors. You can find more information about this in the "Legal Issues" section of the toolkit. You can report any violations to the City by calling your Council office or the Department of Building and Safety by calling **3-1-1**.
  
- ◆ Be creative! Brainstorm ideas with your neighbors, friends, and with your Council Office. The possibilities are endless.