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Anti-Graffiti Removal Options Guide

An Overview of Today's Technology



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The Anti-Graffiti Removal Options

Guide

According to Wikipedia, the **cost for damage and removal of Graffiti**, worldwide, is in the billions of dollars annually.

Cost → **700mil.** **1.5bil.** **140mil.**
Germany United Kindom Los Angeles

That is incredible!

Since you are reading this guide, you are most likely looking for a **solution to a graffiti problem** that you are experiencing.

If you go online and research options for controlling this issue, you will be lost in a sea of information. Chances are that you may not get a direct answer, even after all that reading.

The purpose of this document is to help you make informed choices when it comes to **graffiti protection and removal**.

Experience graffiti removal made easy with these steps:

1. **Pick a type of coating**- Sacrificial or Non-Sacrificial
2. **Apply** anti-graffiti for protection
3. **Remove** graffiti
4. If Sacrificial, **Re-apply** for further protection

This **Anti-Graffiti Removal Options Guide** will provide you with removal direction and information for your specific situation.

*Note that not every option works, or is cost effective, for all the different types of application scenarios.

Sacrificial Coatings Large Open Areas



The first option that can be used for graffiti removal is **Sacrificial Coatings**. This type of barrier protection is widely used in **commercial, industrial and institutional property applications**.

Some **examples** of where these are used would be on **exterior structures** such as:

- ✓ School buildings
- ✓ Playground equipment
- ✓ Retaining Walls
- ✓ Sound proofing walls
- ✓ Bridges
- ✓ Tunnels

The reason that this type of coating has become so popular is that the cost of the material runs in the **\$20-\$25 dollar per gallon** range, is a **water based** paint with no solvents or strong odors and is very easy to apply by brush, roller or by spraying. Simply put, **very easy to use with minimal cost**.

Step 1 → **Apply Product**

Apply the Sacrificial Anti- Graffiti Coating by, **Brush, Roller or Spray**. Brush and Roller Applications are typically used for smaller areas, hard to reach areas or oddly shaped parts needing protection.

When applying the product by Brush or Roller, **2 – 3 coats** may be necessary to achieve adequate film build so that Graffiti does not pass through the coating and stick to the substrate. This is especially important over extremely porous surfaces such as **brick, concrete or Stucco**.

Since the Sacrificial Coating is normally used on large exterior surfaces, applying the product by **Conventional or Airless Spray** is the normal method of application. Applying the product by Spray covers large areas very quickly and is easier to achieve adequate film thickness in a single application over most any surface. **Simply allow the product to dry without being exposed to water for 24 hours at temperatures above 50°F or higher.**

Assuming that we have applied a nice, even coat to our structure, let's walk through the removal process. As we go through this, we will examine the advantages and considerations that you will need to understand in using this system. **SACRIFICIAL COATING** - means that it works by being easy to completely remove, taking the unwanted graffiti with it.

Step 2 **Removing Graffiti**

To do this, you must use a low volume pressure washer (**minimum 1500 psi**) with **150 degree (F)** water. Understandably, this brings up your first 2 considerations:

1. Is this an area that I can freely spray water for removal?
2. Do I have access to this equipment and water supply?

This is why sacrificial coatings are mainly used for exterior applications. As far as the heated water source, self-heating power washers are available for rental or can be purchased in most areas of the country online. Many people doing this type of work simply use the building's water heating system and run it through a standard washer, when it is easily accessible. If these two conditions are not an issue, you simply spray down the surface with the warm water, which **melts away the low temperature waxes in the product**, until the entire visible residue has been removed.

Step 3 **Re-Applying Product**

If your planning includes future protection of this surface, you will need to allow the structure to **dry out completely** and simply **apply another coat of the Anti-Graffiti material**.

Non-Sacrificial Coatings Smaller Areas Harder to Get To



Non-sacrificial Anti-Graffiti coatings are based on a completely different philosophy. The end result of removing the unwanted graffiti is the same, but the **technology** is not. Most of these types of coatings are products that contain a **high silicone load**, with very little surface tension.

The longest lasting, most productive types are made from a **polyurethane** based material. These urethanes are **very chemically resistant** and show little attack from stronger chemicals or pressurized water, used to remove the unwanted paints or inks.

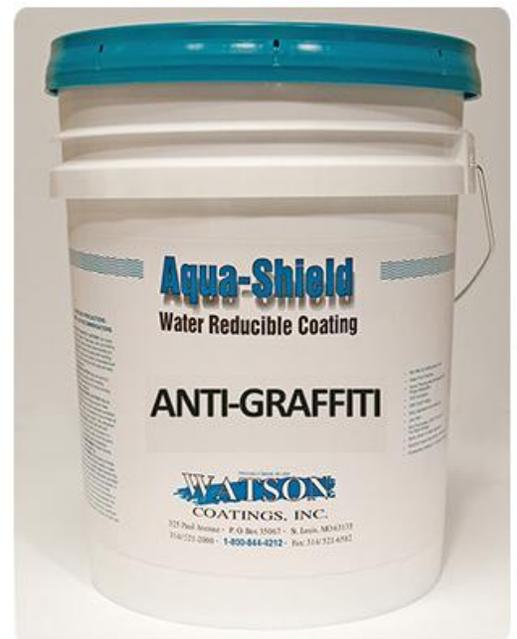
This makes them a better choice for **interior applications**; however, they come with their own set of concerns that must be taken into consideration prior to application.

Step 1 → Apply Product

This product will mostly be sprayed, possibly brushed or rolled. It is recommended to only brush or roll if the area is small.

The most productive urethanes are catalyzed, which means that the base material must be **mechanically mixed** prior to application. Even though some water based versions show promise for this use, the majority are **solvent based** and have a very distinct odor that some people may find offensive or may cause skin irritations.

Along with this, the solvent systems used to make the urethane coatings can aggressively attack weaker paints that you may want to paint over. This consideration may lead to complete removal of the existing coatings in order to use these products, causing delays or additional time in surface preparation.



This, so far may sound a little bleak, but there are some **excellent benefits** to using these products.

Polyurethane coatings:

- Very durable
- Provide long term performance
- Excellent color and gloss retention
- Great resistant to chemicals, hand oils and general abrasion

Step 2 → **Removing Graffiti**

The graffiti can be wiped off with a solvent or cleaner, which will not affect the non-sacrificial coating.

From a cost per gallon point of view they are a little pricy, but even out the overall cost by their **longevity**.

Let's use an exit door for an example. Heavy traffic, lots of wear and hand oils, exterior exposure to ultra violet rays and graffiti. The urethane coatings would be a **long term solution** to all of these concerns:

- Being able to be cleaned by chemicals or by pressurized water
- Giving you options with the exterior/interior exposure
- Lowers the labor needed to maintain the appearance of the surface

Whichever way you may want to go, the problem of **Graffiti removal** has been greatly reduced over the last few years.

The best way to win this fight is to **get these surfaces coated prior to the occurrences**, rather than the extensive labor needed to remove graffiti after the fact.

Preventative Maintenance in critical areas will save time and money, and help ease the burden caused by vandals.

**Contact Watson Coatings, Inc. to discuss a specific application.
Call 314-521-2000 or order a free sample at watsoncoatings.com today!**

SOURCES:

Stats: Wiki link goes here.

Guide: Paul Powers, National Sales Manager | National Association of Corrosion Engineers Certified Coating Inspector #5643



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