

City of Burlington
Office of Public Information
425 South Lexington Avenue
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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Burlington Graffiti Control and Removal Ordinance

In late 2013, the Burlington City Council approved a Graffiti Control and Removal ordinance defining graffiti as a public nuisance and assigning responsibility to property owners for removal of all instances of graffiti on their property. This ordinance will go into effect on June 1, 2014.

The ordinance outlines the prohibition of defacement by applying graffiti to any natural or man-made surface. The existence of graffiti is a violation of the ordinance and must be removed by the property owner within ten days of a notice of defacement by the City. If graffiti is not removed within ten days, the City will declare the property a public nuisance, subject to nuisance abatement by the City's Code Enforcement division.

Burlington Police Chief Smythe says, "Graffiti is a statement by gang members that they are claiming a neighborhood. As responsible citizens, our response should be swift and sure. We should be committed to promptly removing graffiti. This is our statement back that we own these streets and criminal conduct will not be tolerated."

Beginning on June 1, 2014, a 90-day educational period regarding the Graffiti Ordinance will be initiated. During this period, Police Officers will make contact with the owners of properties on which graffiti currently exists. If the graffiti has not been removed from those properties after the passage of 90 days, property owners will be contacted to begin an abatement process through the City's Code Enforcement division.

The elimination of graffiti reduces crime, improves economic development opportunities, and improves neighborhood appearance, garnering increased community pride. The Burlington Police Department is committed to charging individuals found guilty of vandalism to the greatest extent of the law.

If a Burlington resident or business owner is the victim of graffiti, they are encouraged to call the Burlington Police department at (336) 229-3500 to report the crime. If graffiti is noticed within the Burlington city limits, residents are encouraged to report it by calling the Connecting Burlington Communities hotline at (336) 222-5024 or online at www.burlingtonNC.gov/CBC.

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