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Building Rx

By: Cst. Tom McKay

The “house” Doctor has called and the results are in. “I’m afraid it is contagious”. “What should I do?”, you ask. “You have to treat the symptoms and then take some precautions”, the Doctor said. “And if I don’t bother treating it, after all, I’m busy, this is a real bother and I can just block it out?” is your reply. At that point, the Doctor sits you down and says “if you don’t treat this now, it will only get worse and, before long, people will start avoiding you and your business”. “Sounds very serious” you say. “It is” says the Doctor.

Question: what are we talking about and would you take this advice? The answer is YOU SHOULD, chances are you are already ignoring the problem, we are talking about graffiti. Graffiti is the bricks and mortar equivalent of a disease that affects buildings, communities and people. It spreads very quickly if left unchecked, leads to a run down appearance and ultimately influence peoples’ decision to spend time in an area. What’s worse, graffiti can attract more disorderlies into an area and lead to more serious crime if it is not dealt with swiftly.

What should you do if you have graffiti? Remove it right away. City of Vancouver studies showed that areas that clean up graffiti suffer a greatly reduced recurrence rate compared to areas where graffiti removal is simply encouraged.

What should you do if you want to prevent graffiti? Consider coating highly, visible/susceptible walls with a permanent anti-graffiti sealer (available through graffiti removal services or commercially) or covering the wall with a mural or landscape material being careful not to block sightlines to doors and windows.