

Graffiti Testing - to ASTM D6578

Undesirable, unwanted or illegal graffiti and “tagging” has increasingly become a difficult and expensive task for cities and councils to manage.

Any graffiti or street art that is placed on building facades or infrastructure without the permission of the owner is classified as illegal and may be removed.

The City of Melbourne published its Graffiti Management Policy in 2021. Prevention and prompt removal are at the forefront of this management policy. Targets are in place to ensure timely removal particularly if the content is political, religious or racially charged. Prompt removal of graffiti reduces the likelihood of it returning to the same place.



An important prevention strategy includes choosing surface material from which graffiti may be effectively removed and to select anti-graffiti coatings, paints, films or textiles wherever possible.

ASTM D6578, Standard Practice for Determination of Graffiti Resistance offers a test method and rating system to determine the ability of a surface to be effectively restored after graffiti application. The test method uses standard spray paints, chalks and inks to challenge a surface. A rating for removal effectiveness is given based on the ease of which the applicant may be removed.

A surface that may be cleaned with a dry rag scores the highest possible rating of 10. If a surface is simply not cleanable and shows a change of shade and or loss of gloss a rating of 1 is given. Various detergents and solvents that may be used are given a rating depending on ease of use. For example, complete removal with detergent is awarded a higher rating than damage which requires mineral spirits or xylene to remove.

AWTA Product Testing offers testing in accordance with ASTM D6578 to assess the performance of graffiti preventative measures.

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