

City of **SANTA CLARITA**  
**Graffiti Task Force**



**2010 YEARLY REPORT**

The Graffiti Task Force (GTF) is a collaborative action group that meets quarterly to discuss and develop solutions to graffiti-related issues. The GTF is made up of employees and community partners from many different divisions, including: City Managers Office, Community Service, Risk Management, Parks, Recreation, Landscape Maintenance District (LMD), Community Preservation, Technology Service, Public Works, Transit, and community partners (i.e., Los Angeles County, College of The Canyons, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the William S. Hart Union High School District).



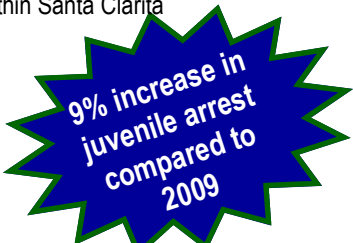
<p><b><u>Number of Tags Removed in 2010</u></b>  <b>9,819*</b>  <i>A 76% increase compared to 2009</i>  <i>*6,088 removals were found by staff while on patrol (unreported calls)</i></p>	<p><b><u>Hotspots</u></b>                  Rainbow Glen                  Via Princessa                  Northbridge Paseos                  Isabella Parkway                  McBean Transfer Station                  Whites Canyon Road</p>	<p><b><u>Top Five Tagged Surfaces</u></b>                  1. Utility Box- 1,562 removals                  2. Wall- 1,420 removals                  3. Bridge- 887 removals                  4. Sign- 858 removals                  5. Wash- 728 removals</p>
<p><b><u>Calls and eService by Areas</u></b>  <b>Canyon Country- 4,127</b> <i>48% increase from 2009</i>  <b>Newhall- 2,845</b> <i>63% increase from 2009</i>  <b>Valencia- 2,197</b> <i>75% increase from 2009</i>  <b>Saugus- 1,507</b> <i>28% increase from 2009</i>  <b>L.A. County- 40</b> <i>21% decrease from 2009</i></p>	<p><b><u>Total Tags by Type</u></b>                  Crews- 4,749                  Oners- 3,470                  Gangs- 1,073  <i>A 75% increase in Crew, Oners, Gang graffiti compared to 2009</i></p>	
<p><b><u>Removals by Paseo Patrol Volunteers</u></b>                  Over <b>250</b> tags removed</p>	<p><b><u>Abatement Notices Issued</u></b>  <b>16</b>                  100% Compliance from Property Owners</p>	

**Sheriff's Collaboration and Arrests**

City staff met regularly with a Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Graffiti Detective, the COBRA Unit (Gang and Juvenile Crime), and the Community Interaction Team (CIT), which resulted in:

- Home improvement store compliance check for proper storage of spray paint and markers.
- Two surveillance operations in Valencia.
- Four bike patrols in the Northbridge, Old Orchard and Valencia Glen paseos, and the South Fork trail.
- Response to one incident when the "Merlin," the spray paint detection device went off at a Canyon Country location.
- Arrests of 5 prolific taggers, responsible for over \$250,000 in damages.
- Shut down of 3 tagging crews that operated within Santa Clarita

**Total Arrests in 2010:**  
**189**  
*124 Juveniles/ 65 Adults*



**Restitution**

In 2010, Graffiti Removal staff attended 12 restitution hearings to confirm restitution on graffiti vandalism cases. Over 18,000 dollars has been paid in full by 19 graffiti vandals. There are over 45 vandals with outstanding restitution owed to the City. Graffiti Removal Staff worked with the Los Angeles County Probation Department to confirm all the information regarding restitution owed, amount paid by vandals, and balance on restitution owed was tracked properly.



## Trends

In 2010, Graffiti Removal Staff observed an increase in:



- Tagging on the paseos in Northbridge and Old Orchard
- Use of acrylic markers throughout the City
- Tagging crews operating in Santa Clarita (11 new). Over 60 Tagging Crews have been recorded in the e-graffiti database since 2007.
- Graffiti on utility boxes throughout Santa Clarita
- Tagging on the freeways surrounding Santa Clarita



## Community Involvement

- Graffiti Removal staff conducted 16 Teens Against Graffiti (TAG) projects, with over 250 volunteers removing over 600 tags from City wash channels.
- The City's Boxing Program removed 20 tags and any prior patchwork from East Newhall.
- Graffiti removal staff used over 470 gallons of paint to cover graffiti in the City washes in 2010.
- The wash from Whites Canyon to Sierra Highway was painted one congruent color by court ordered teens. Projects such as these eliminate the "patchwork painting" which can be seen from City streets.



## Getting the Word Out

- Over 2,000 students from local junior high and high schools and 75 adults participated in graffiti awareness presentations in 2010.
- Graffiti removal staff utilized a new interactive Powerpoint presentation to enhance outreach efforts.
- Over 300 Junior High School students participated in a Graffiti Awareness presentation on the consequences of graffiti and how to participate in Teens Against Graffiti (TAG) at the Youth Summit on October 20.
- New outreach efforts were made with groups such as Vision In Progress (VIP), ACTION, VIDA.



## Paint Matching Trailer

The Paint Matching Trailer (PMT) was used to assist eight private property owners in Newhall. The PMT generates paint that is the exact color of the surface where the graffiti is located and eliminates patchwork painting that can be just as much as visual blight as the graffiti itself. Staff provided paint to the property owners for future clean up.



Before



After

## Teaming Up!

City departments including the City Manager's Office, PRCS, Administrative Services, Transit and Public Works teamed up to work on various projects including:

- Improving the E-graffiti database to include exact staff costs for removals, drop-down boxes for consistent data entering, and increased maximum file upload.
- Eradication of graffiti for special events including Earth Day, the Marathon, and Pride Day.
- Creation of graffiti hotline information cards to provide to business owners and residents.
- Beautification of the area leading into Elsmere Canyon.



## CHP Collaboration



On August 31, Graffiti Removal staff trained four California Highway Patrol Officers (CHP) on how to use the e-graffiti database. CHP officers now input graffiti incidents they find on the 14 and 5 freeways and utilize the database to see if the vandals they have in custody are also vandalizing throughout Santa Clarita. This will facilitate building a stronger case against the vandals. CHP Officers also participate in the Graffiti Task Force quarterly meetings.

## e-Graffiti Database

Technology Services staff added new features to the e-Graffiti database, which include enhanced reports and an updated mapping feature. The mapping feature takes the GPS coordinates of the graffiti and dynamically overlays it across a Google Map. Using this map, staff can search by tagger, dates, and distinguish gang graffiti. This will help Sheriff Deputies and City staff identify areas in the City that are heavily impacted by gang graffiti.



City of  
**SANTA CLARITA**  
**TRANSIT**



In 2010, the Transit Division saw a 25% decrease in graffiti vandalism on City buses compared to 2009. Maintenance staff reported 30 buses per month had window guards replaced due to graffiti etching. The majority of the tagging is seen on the buses that serve schools in Canyon Country.