



SAFE & SOUND

Making Milwaukee neighborhoods safe places to work, live and raise families

Community Partners



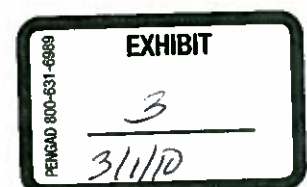
Safe & Sound has worked hard towards achieving the goals of the anti-graffiti efforts of the 2009 CDGA Activity Work plan and outcomes and the results are impressive.

Short-term outcomes were to develop or maintain anti-graffiti initiatives and decrease the presence of graffiti in three targeted areas within MPD Districts 2, 5 and 6, and remove 2,000 square-feet of graffiti. As of December 2009 Safe & Sound has established anti-graffiti initiatives in three Milwaukee Police Districts 2, 5 and 6. District 6 was included until June when the boundaries were changed they now fall exclusively outside of the Safe & Sound target areas. However, other police districts have become interested and inspired by the successes of working with offenders and community. District 7 has since held several graffiti removal events and District 3 has also expressed an interest. This was accomplished by using the 6th District successes as a model. Captain Gaglione, his officers, Community Prosecutor, Sharon Blando and Probation and Parole has consistently supported this collaboration. It would not have been possible or have been incorporated into other districts without everyone working together.

The measurable objectives of the Safe & Sound anti-graffiti funding were to remove 500 instances covering 2,000 square feet of graffiti and hold five community events. Safe & Sound has exceeded its goal by more than 10 times, removing 109,140 square feet of tagging and gang graffiti totaling 674 incidences. Of these incidences 184 instances were a result of gang graffiti while 490 instances were from tagging. Of these, 399 instances of graffiti were painted over and 275 had to be removed with chemicals. An additional 59 were reported to the City of Milwaukee for removal. These accomplishments were made possible through year-round weekly graffiti removal including community meetings and events which totaled 40.

An additional strategy used to increase quality of life and property values is neighborhood improvement events. An impressive 88 neighborhood improvement events were planned and executed with Safe Place youth and residents with a total of 2,512 participants, 1,720 of which were unduplicated participants. Additionally, a total of 430 collaborators participated in neighborhood improvement events, including 319 law enforcement professionals and 84 community based organizations. Several significant outcomes were realized through neighborhood improvement events, such as affixing alley identification to 454 garages for increased safety. A total of 5,110 community service hours were logged by community residents, with 1,219 hours served by offenders with court ordered hours and supervised offenders from minimum security facilities such as Felmers Chaney Correctional Center. Additional evidence of the impact is the 2,034 bags of garbage cleaned up in this process.

Over 57 reports to law enforcement of gang or nuisance activity pertaining to graffiti were reported in 2009. Oftentimes graffiti is associated with an ongoing neighborhood gang dispute, a shooting incident, drug dealing or criminal loitering. Removing the gang graffiti in these areas gives us direct access to the residents dealing with these issues and thereby the information needed to make law enforcement efforts



most effective. Community Partners also reported incidents of graffiti to the Department of Neighborhood Services. Both of these numbers are low, which is primarily a result of Community Partners staff addressing the vandalism rather than reporting and by working more directly with law enforcement on graffiti issues, thus reducing the need to submit complaints or reports.

An estimate of 5,000 anti-graffiti resource information pieces to be distributed door-to-door was set. To accomplish this goal four new anti-graffiti outreach materials were developed and are being disbursed in the targeted areas. These include approaches from the perspective of residents, businesses, offenders and law enforcement, all in English and Spanish. Other outcomes include: increased leadership involvement of youth and adults in anti-crime initiatives through the development of 5 new block clubs in these areas. An astonishing 26 block clubs and block watches have been formed, with 17 in District 5 and 9 in District 2 this year. Making this possible was the close communication with residents in the highest-crime areas and a visible change brought on by graffiti removal. We far exceeded the goal of 800 personal door-to-door contacts with residents in areas of MPD Districts 2, 5 and 6 plagued by graffiti. Over 4,476 personal door-to-door contacts with residents in these MPD Districts were conducted.

In addition, the goal of block club education was achieved by a city-wide block club mailing emphasizing anti-graffiti resources was mailed to 112 block clubs and block watch captains. Many of these block clubs became involved in the anti-graffiti efforts during the year, working side-by-side with offenders, police and Community Partners. Several of these events garnered media attention with the Journal Sentinel, local television, and even a video segment produced for Public Television on effective community governmental collaborations.

To measure quality of life a survey of resident perceptions, opinions and knowledge related to anti-graffiti CDGA outcome goals was conducted. Of residents surveyed, only 13% had their property vandalized in the last year. A little over 15% had reported graffiti to the police while 92% stated that they were willing to report graffiti to law enforcement if necessary. Interestingly, 60% reported that graffiti made them feel more unsafe. Overall police and anti-graffiti services were seen very favorably with only 7% reporting poor service. Well over half were interested in block clubs. The top concerns for residents were loitering, graffiti and gangs.

In terms of crime reduction outcomes, the Safe & Sound sectors overall saw reductions in every category of WIBR Class A offenses reported through the City of Milwaukee COMPASS, with the exception of arson which rose 12% city-wide. The North and Southside neighborhoods involved in the project saw progress in some areas but not all. For example the Harambee North neighborhood saw significant drops in vehicle theft (-40%) but a 20% increase in criminal damage to property and overall only 1% decrease in crime statistics. This is in comparison to Kosciuszko Park which saw a substantial drop in overall crime (-16%) and 12% drop in criminal damage to property. The Clarke Square saw 5% drop while the Historic Southwest saw a 13% drop overall. Cumulatively, the WIBR Group A offenses dropped an average of 8.5%.



**SAFE &
SOUND**

You and your neighbors have
the power to make a difference!

Community Partners



- Do you want to make your block safer and keep it safe?
- Are you interested in working for positive change in your neighborhood for yourself? Your children and grandchildren?

**Call your Community Partner today to
find out about Safe & Sound Safe Places
for youth and how you can get involved.**

Operation Payback makes its mark after graffiti taggers leave theirs

By Tom Tolan of the Journal Sentinel

Aaron Edwards, a Community Partner with Safe & Sound, coordinates the Operation Payback program for a few hours every Tuesday out of the Milwaukee Police Department's 2nd District.



An orange strip of gang graffiti on the wall of a vacant house at S. 20th and W. Rogers streets: gone. Somebody's personal tag on a city trash can at 11th and Rogers: history. Big red letters dissing the Latin Kings, applied just Monday night to the alley wall of El Señorial Restaurant on S. 31st St.: not a trace left.

So went the weekly work of Operation Payback on Tuesday. The program, sponsored by Safe & Sound, a crime-prevention group funded with federal and foundation grants, uses offenders on probation to remove graffiti and pick up trash on the streets of two south side police districts.

Aaron Edwards, a community partner with Safe & Sound, coordinates the program for a few hours every Tuesday out of the Milwaukee Police Department's 2nd District, with collaboration from the police department, the state Probation and Parole office, the district attorney's office and other city and law-enforcement agencies.

"We have a three-pronged approach" to reducing crime and violence, said Edwards about Safe & Sound. "We work with law enforcement, community and youth."

Operation Payback gets tips on where to find garbage and graffiti from police, or from the city's Department of Neighborhood Services or they find them themselves - and off they go.

On Tuesday, it was a small crew doing the work - 17 clients of Probation and Parole were supposed to be there to burn some community-service hours, said Amy Burger, a department agent, but only four showed up. Still - shepherded by three Milwaukee cops, along with Burger, Edwards and a member of the district attorney's community prosecution unit, and teamed with a couple of community volunteers - they got a lot done.

Two of the offenders, along with volunteers Ramon and José Gonzalez, picked up trash and erased graffiti along S. 11th St. between Rogers and Mitchell streets, where Police Officer Cory Harris had noticed a mess while on patrol. The other two went with Edwards and Jesus Gloria, District 2's community liaison officer, in a police station wagon crammed with paint cans and dispensers of graffiti remover. Gloria got a call Tuesday morning from Miguel Huerta, owner of El Señorial, and they headed in that direction, stopping along the way wherever fresh tagging popped up.

Everywhere there were signs of the continuing battle against taggers - four shades of gray on a store wall, where the owner paints over graffiti about once a month and said he'd once been tagged twice in one day. On 16th and Rogers, a gang tag was found with a backward K followed by a forward one - a slap at the Latin Kings, Edwards said. That kind of thing gets erased quickly, he added: "We don't want them to see each other's dissing tags," he said. "They see those and get all riled up."

Personal tags on a couple of mailboxes, the orange graffiti on 20th St. that Gloria attributed to a gang called the Sureños also were painted over or removed quickly by Brad Hoepfner and another man on probation who gave his name only as R.J. So was the big red tag at the restaurant.

Edwards said he helped launch the Payback program in April 2008 in the Police Department's 6th District, with the help of Capt. Donald Gaglione, the commander there, along with Ald. Robert Donovan and others. It was

started after a "notorious tagging crew" called the WR, which had caused thousands of dollars in damage on the south side, was busted, he said. "Some had to do jail time, and some had to do community service," Edwards said.

At first, Payback was a program just for taggers on probation, Edwards said, but then word of it got out to probation officers, and some of them assigned clients with other offenses. It got so successful that similar operations were launched in police Districts 2 and 5 - which, like District 6, contain some of the city's biggest graffiti hotspots, on the south and east sides.

Then the Police Department redrew its district maps, Gaglione shifted to the 2nd District, and Edwards came along, leaving police officers to keep the program going in District 6.

On Tuesday, the group cleaned up the neighborhood in more than one way. Working with two of the offenders at 11th and Rogers, Harris looked down the block and saw a man beating a woman out on the sidewalk. He and Burger intervened, and the man was arrested and sent off in a police car.

"That's why I like coming here," said Iraida Bablitch, one of the workers on probation, wearing a neon green T-shirt with "Operation Pay Back" on the back. "Something's always happening."

Below left: Brad Hoepfner paints over a gang tag at a house on W. Rogers St. in Milwaukee as part of Operation Payback, a community service project. The project is a collaboration between police, the community and the Safe and Sound anti-crime program.

Below right: A gang tag on the side of a business on Milwaukee's south side is eradicated.



Above left: Iraida Bablitch removes a "tag" on a garbage can. Aaron Edwards (right) said he helped launch the Payback program in April 2008 in the Police Department's 6th District, with the help of Capt. Donald Gaglione, the commander there, along with Ald. Robert Donovan and others.

Above right: The back of a police vehicle used for the community service program Operation Payback is filled with a variety of paints, brushes, rollers and paint removers for use on graffiti.