

## Graffiti Removal ¶

Those portions of the bridge near the face of the thrust blocks and within arm's reach from the ground are prone to graffiti vandalism. Removal of graffiti is perceived to be different when a penetrating sealer and when a pigmented film-forming coating is applied. ¶

**Penetrating Sealer:** A penetrating sealer does not coat the surface of the concrete. Therefore, paint will adhere to the concrete and will need to be removed, or painted over, in the instance of vandalism. ¶

**Painting over graffiti** will obfuscate or otherwise destroy the color, finish, and texture of the sealed original concrete. Use of a graffiti remover would likely ameliorate the graffiti but is not likely to remove it. Water or medium blasting will likely remove graffiti. However, the blast cleaning will negatively impact the color, finish, and texture of the concrete surface. It is likely that the remedy to graffiti of a sealed concrete surface is to blast clean the concrete, reseal the concrete and live with the alteration to the color, finish, and texture. ¶

**Pigmented Film-Forming Coating:** The coating will develop an opaque acrylic film over the concrete surface. Removal of graffiti from the coated concrete is envisioned to include removal of the graffiti to the extent possible with low pressure water blasting and/or solvents. If the film is disturbed during the penetrating process, or the color is changed, the coating could simply be re-applied over the graffitied area. Alternatively, the coating could be applied over the graffiti as if painting over the graffiti. Removal of graffiti from a coating surface is believed to be less labor-intensive than removal of graffiti from a sealed concrete surface. ¶

Therefore, the penetrating sealer presents something of a Catch-22.

There is no good "graffiti removal answer" if a penetrating sealer is used – an anti-graffiti coating could be applied on top of the sealer at additional cost and contrary to NPS Brief 15, or high pressure washing used, which is also contrary to NPS Brief 15.

### **Film Forming Coating:**

The film forming coating establishes a barrier that prevents the graffiti from adhering as it would to uncoated concrete.

It is likely that graffiti could be at least partially removed with washing, solvents or low pressure washing.

If discoloration remains, the pigmented film forming coating could be reapplied to restore finish and color.

(Theoretically, the pigmented film forming coating could be applied directly over the graffiti as a remedy.)

Therefore, the film forming coating has some properties of an anti-graffiti coating.

Provided below is what ONE's Concrete Repair and Surface Treatment Alternatives Memo says about the topic.

Questions and comments are welcome.

Regards, Rich

~~Graffiti Removal: Removal and repair of graffiti is believed to be less laborious if a pigmented film-forming coating is applied to the original concrete.~~

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**From:** Toomsen, Sarah <[Sarah.Toomsen@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Sarah.Toomsen@milwaukeecountywi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 6:09 PM  
**To:** Darrell Berry <[Darrell.Berry@meadhunt.com](mailto:Darrell.Berry@meadhunt.com)>; Steve Olson <[steve.olson@one-mn.com](mailto:steve.olson@one-mn.com)>; Rich Johnson <[rich.johnson@one-mn.com](mailto:rich.johnson@one-mn.com)>; Emily Pettis <[emily.pettis@meadhunt.com](mailto:emily.pettis@meadhunt.com)>; Stave, Karl <[Karl.Stave@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Karl.Stave@milwaukeecountywi.gov)>; Prusak, Blake <[Blake.Prusak@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Blake.Prusak@milwaukeecountywi.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Graffiti on Concrete Bridge/t.v. smashed below

Sharing just to reinforce how frequently we have to deal with graffiti removal on this bridge. Hopefully an open bridge would mean more eyes in the park and less vandalism, but it will remain an issue over the life of the bridge.

Would the use of sealants on the historic fabric include an anti-graffiti product that would mean we could/should no longer pressure wash graffiti off?

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**From:** Lake Park Friends <[lakeparkfriends@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lakeparkfriends@sbcglobal.net)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 12:52 PM  
**To:** Toomsen, Sarah <[Sarah.Toomsen@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Sarah.Toomsen@milwaukeecountywi.gov)>; Forlenza, Sue <[Susanne.Forlenza@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Susanne.Forlenza@milwaukeecountywi.gov)>  
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**Subject:** Graffiti on Concrete Bridge/t.v. smashed below

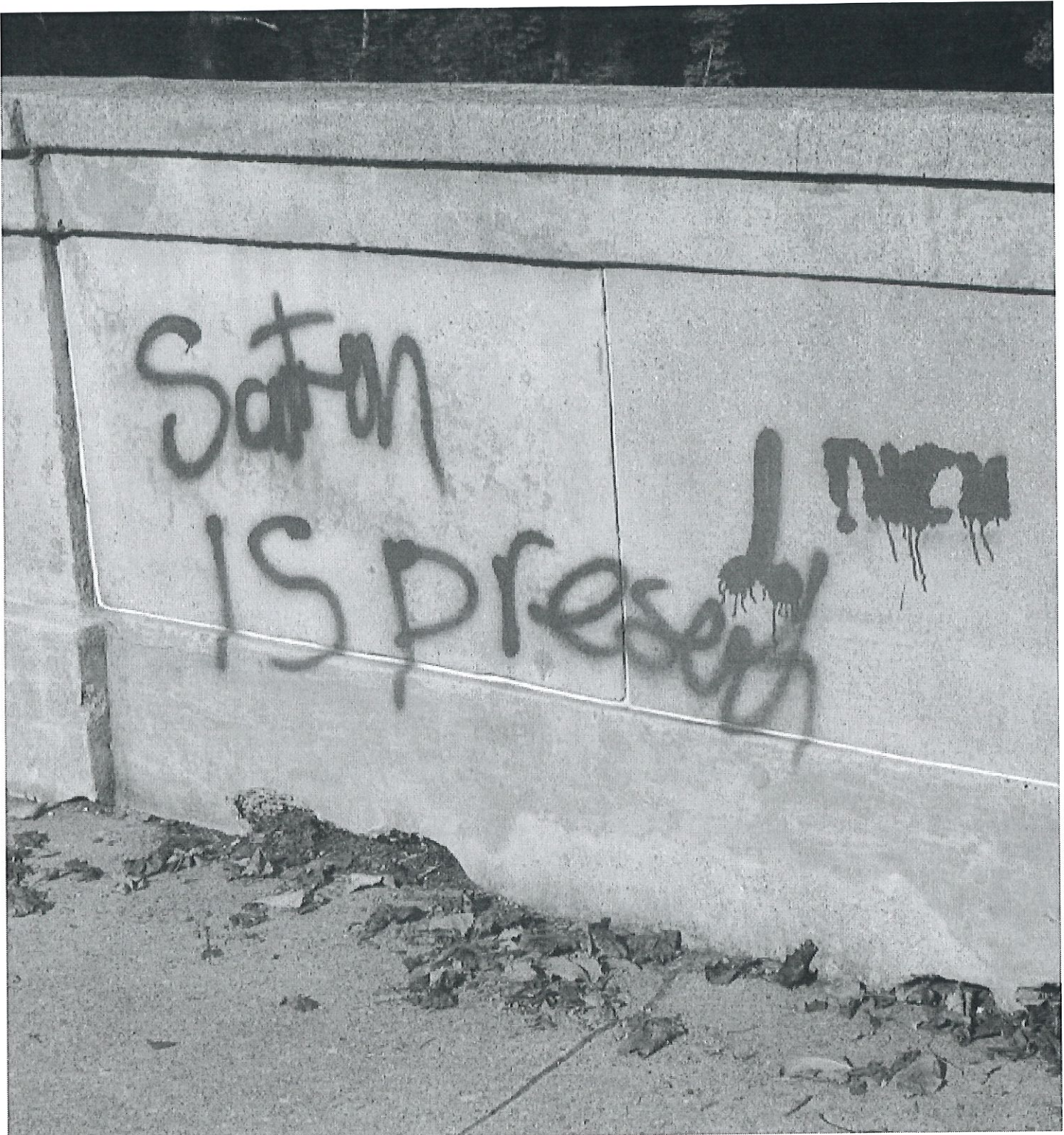
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Hi Sarah and Sue, attached is a photo of some graffiti on the concrete bridge. There is other graffiti, but this is the most obvious. Also, someone threw a t.v. off of that bridge and it is in pieces on the road below. Thanks.







See you in the park,  
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