



**South Suburban
PARKS AND RECREATION**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**South Suburban Parks and Recreation Alerts Public
to Graffiti's Financial Impact**

Graffiti is writing or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface in a public place. South Suburban Park and Recreation District is experiencing an uptick in graffiti throughout the District and wants to alert residents about the problem and the financial impact of graffiti removal.

According to District Senior Park Ranger Dan Scheuerman, graffiti typically increases this time of year as temperatures rise and daylight lasts longer, and individuals choose to express their feelings on public property. Since Jan. 1, there have been 43 incidents District-wide.

South Suburban Park and Recreation District encompasses 41 square miles, and with 136 monument signs to designate parks, trails, recreation facilities, tennis courts and more, there are ample opportunities to vandalize District property. Most recently the trail underpasses have been a problem; however, signs, playground equipment, trees, sidewalks, fencing, shelters and restrooms are all targets.

It is the District's goal to remove graffiti as soon as possible. Painting over graffiti is the easiest fix; however, some surfaces such as signs and sidewalks require the use of chemicals and power washing equipment, which increase time, labor and expense.

In 2007, the District began tracking graffiti within its boundaries. Since then, the District has incurred 1,269 incidents for a cleanup cost of \$301,145. Time and money spent removing graffiti could have been spent on upkeep and enhancements to parks, trails, open space and facilities. Graffiti cleanup not only costs the District, but ultimately impacts those the Districts serves.

South Suburban has installed security cameras in frequently-hit locations to help curb the problem; however, no area in the District is immune to this activity. Although most graffiti is done by teens, District park rangers have spoken with adults who wrongly believe it is their right to express their "talents" on public property.

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South Suburban wants the public's help in reducing graffiti throughout the District. Remind your teenagers that graffiti is illegal, and those who are caught will be issued a citation and a bill for the cleanup costs. Subsequent offences could lead to higher fines, community service or possibly more severe consequences, such as felony convictions. To report graffiti, please call Senior Park Ranger Dan Scheuerman at 303-435-8225, or 303-435-8227 afterhours; or South Suburban at 303-798-5131.

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