

CAPS TIPS

*Brought to you by the Chicago Police Department
Your Partners for Safe Neighborhoods*

SPRING CLEANUP TIPS

Chicago and Spring traditionally mean Spring clean up time. At this time of the year, you should remember that keeping your block and neighborhood clean can go a long way to keeping your neighborhood safe. The following "tips" should help you, the Police Department and other City agencies -- Chicago's CAPS team -- build a cleaner and safer community this season and throughout the year.

Make sure abandoned automobiles are removed.

These vehicles are an invitation to vandalism and theft. The City will remove cars that are illegally parked or autos that do not have proper license plates and City stickers. Reporting those cars to your beat officer can ensure speedy removal. If you think a car is abandoned or stolen, your beat officer can check it out. If you are unsure of your beat, call 311, Chicago's *Other* Helpline.

Make sure you don't "pile up" problems. Spring cleaning inside your home can lead to problems outside. Boxes and other materials can be invitations for arson. Make sure they don't pile up by coordinating your spring cleaning with bulk pickup days in your ward. If you are unsure of the dates, call your local ward office or 311. If you must place refuse in the alley, be sure that the pile is not near wooden porches or fences that can be easily ignited.

Make sure your lights are working. Light is one of the greatest crime preventers. Check your gangway, garage, porch and backyard lights to ensure that they are in working order. Scan your street and alley lights and report outages to 311 or to your beat officers. Don't forget about the lights at parks and playlots. Unlit parks can be gathering or hiding places for those who would commit illegal activities.

Make sure graffiti is removed. The best way to defeat graffiti -- and the gang activity that often comes with it -- is to remove it immediately. This lets taggers know businesses and home owners will

not tolerate them. With the permission of the owner, Graffiti Blasters will remove graffiti from brick or glass surfaces of houses, garages or businesses. For other surfaces, the City will provide paint without charge. The City can also remove graffiti from street signs and garbage cans. To keep your neighborhood graffiti-free, call 311 for Graffiti Blasters or report repeated tagging at your next beat meeting.

Make sure abandoned and neglected buildings are reported.

Left alone, they pose a threat of fire and criminal assault. New housing and demolition laws are being effectively used by beat teams throughout the city to make sure that such buildings are cleaned out, fixed up or removed. Bring problem buildings to the attention of your beat officer or to your next block club meeting to ensure the attention and action needed.

More information about CAPS is available on the World Wide Web at www.cityofchicago.org. Join the CAPS team of police officers, residents, and City Departments working together for a safer Chicago.

City of Chicago

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