

Graffiti unit gets a boost

STAFF REPORTER

The capacity of the City of Cape Town's Graffiti Unit will be bolstered by 168 temporary workers from February to June this year.

The workers will be sourced from the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) database across the city and will assist in removing illegal graffiti.

"Illegal graffiti is a concern and can quickly change a neighbourhood. It can create the impression that no one cares about the area, it can discourage business and it diverts funds that now have to be used to remove it, instead of being used for community programmes.

"Offensive or obscene graffiti can also affect residents sense of safety and security in their own communities," said mayoral committee member for safety and security and social services JP Smith.

The EPWP group will be part of two teams tasked with cleaning up gang and illegal graffiti across the city.

The City's EPWP database is centralised and access to work opportunities is based on a computerised random selection process.

National guidelines prescribe that the EPWP work relates to



■ An EPWP worker removes graffiti from a wall in Woodlands.

any temporary work ranging from a day to the full duration of a project.

The key focus is that all of these types of opportunities are temporary, and employment depends on the type of work on offer and the project duration.

"Negative images and words not only scar the urban landscape but also those residents who have to look at it daily. Getting rid of gangster graffiti will help restore dignity to many communities and instil a sense of pride," said Mr Smith.

"The City recognises the value of public art and street artists as their work can inspire and provoke new thinking, it can beautify shared spaces, uplift communities and tell the rich stories of our history. I want to encourage graffiti artists who want to do graffiti or public art to contact our arts and culture branch," said Mr Smith.

For more information, call their branch at 021 400 5944. Illegal graffiti can be reported to 107 from a landline or 021 480 7700 from a cellphone.