



Seattle Public Utilities

# Seattle Clean City

Community Impact Report

2024





Our team is dedicated to protecting community health and preserving the environment. We work diligently to keep Seattle's public spaces **clean, healthy, and accessible to everyone.**





# Keeping Seattle Clean and Healthy

## A Message from our Director

**Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Clean City** is proud to share its 2024 community impact report, which highlights our efforts and accomplishments over the past year. This report reflects our commitment to advancing strategic goals developed in partnership with Seattle's diverse communities while supporting SPU's broader vision of Community-Centered services, One Water stewardship, and Zero Waste initiatives.

By leveraging data-driven insights and industry best practices, we continue to provide responsive, high-quality services that meet the needs of our neighbors. With a dedicated **\$19.7 million budget** in 2024, we have strengthened collaborations with both internal and external partners across the city. These partnerships allow us to better understand Seattle's evolving challenges and implement innovative, long-term solutions.

Every program within Clean City represents an opportunity to address immediate community needs while laying the foundation for sustainable progress. I am honored to lead a team of passionate public servants who work tirelessly to create a **cleaner, healthier Seattle**. I look forward to building on this momentum in 2025 and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to make Seattle a more vibrant and sustainable place for all!

**Lee Momon**  
Clean City Director





# A Glance at

Seattle Clean City's Impact in 2024

**4.1 million** or **410**  
pounds of waste collected and removed from the right-of-way orca whales



**804,000**

sharps (needles, syringes, lancets) collected and properly disposed

↑ 0.07% increase

**1,091,000**

square feet of graffiti abated in public and private property

↑ 25% increase in sq. ft. abated



or **16**

Space Needle observation decks



**28,865**

hours volunteered with Seattle Adopt a Street program, contributing a substantial value of **\$1,162,682** as per the Value of Volunteer Time report

↑ 21% increase

*\*percentage shown is compared to 2023 data*



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# Clean Seattle Starts Here!

**Seattle Clean City** administers programs to protect the environment, maintain public space access, and improve community health. We remove **litter, graffiti, sharps, illegal dumping, and other hazards** swiftly and efficiently to keep Seattle clean and healthy.

We collaborate with the community to identify areas for improvement, gather feedback, and ensure our work reflects our commitment to being community-centered. Our services are tailored to community needs, encouraging participation and fostering a vibrant, safe, and clean city for all.

## Our Programs



*\*\*The Graffiti Abatement Program has transitioned to the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department. The data presented in this report reflects information collected during 2024, when the program was still part of Seattle Public Utilities.*







# Adopt a Street

## Adopting Streets, why?

The Adopt a Street (AAS) program began in the late 1980s to inspire civic pride and keep Seattle's neighborhoods clean and beautiful. Since then, thousands of volunteers have cared for hundreds of miles of city streets. Today, over **1,639 active participants** continue this important work.

Volunteers receive all the tools, resources, and collection services they need to keep their street segments free from litter and debris. But it's more than just cleaning – AAS brings neighbors together. By working side by side, participants strengthen their neighborhoods, build friendships, and take pride in making their community a better place.

Adopt a Street's success shows the power of teamwork and shared responsibility. Together, Seattle residents help protect the environment, promote community pride, and maintain clean, welcoming streets for all.

### 2024 Impact:

498

New Volunteers

↑ 23% increase

2,888

Cleanups Reported

↑ 23% increase

258,540

Pounds Collected

↑ 40% increase

28,865

hours volunteered with the program, contributing a substantial value of **\$1,162,682** as per the Value of Volunteer Time report



\*percentage shown is compared to 2023 data



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*I am always so encouraged when I am tabling about Adopt a Street at different community events! I meet so many people who are impacted by litter, want to do something about it, and are grateful that we have free supplies to support them in their cleanup efforts. In 2024, I attended over **15 community events**, which led to over **100 new volunteers!***

*A litter grabber isn't always what people look for, but when it finds them, they're pretty thrilled 😊 .*

*The best part of my job is to see how programs like AAS bring community together for a common goal. Here are three of my favorite stories from 2024. I hope you enjoy them as much as I did and get inspired! **Join us!***



**Jenny**

Adopt a Street Manager



## Beyond Cleanups: Building Community, Inspiring Action

*We don't just clean the city – we bring people together.*

### **From Cleanup to Roommate**

*Through a partnership with **Hunters Capital, Caring for Capitol Hill** organizes monthly cleanups that have become a hub for community bonding. The effort brought two regular Adopt a Street volunteers together—so much so that they're now housemates!*

### **Ravenna's Friday Crew**

*What started with a single volunteer in Ravenna/Cowen Park grew into a dedicated team. With the help of a neighbor, the group now boasts five regulars who gather every Friday afternoon to care for the park, keeping the space clean and welcoming for all.*

### **From Trash Picker to Youth Trendsetter**

***Shannon**, a regular volunteer in the Othello neighborhood, has inspired her community in unexpected ways. After seeing her dedication, several neighbors signed up to help at outreach events. Shannon shared with us a lighthearted story:*

*"Apparently, the sight of me out on 43rd Ave South has inspired a few of my young neighbors to ask for their very own trash pickers for Xmas, LOL! From what I hear, they're only using them to pinch their parents' and siblings' bums, but I'm hopeful they'll transition to using them on garbage in the street, LOL!"*







## 2024 Highlights

### All Hands Cleanup



We organized **10 Adopt a Street** cleanups across 5 Seattle neighborhoods, bringing together over **353 volunteers** who contributed **800 hours** of service and removed **13,305 pounds** of trash from city streets.

### One Seattle Day of Service

We engaged over **2,500 volunteers** in the 3rd Annual One Seattle Day of Service, completing **130 service projects**, including more than **75 litter pick-up activities** supported by Adopt a Street.





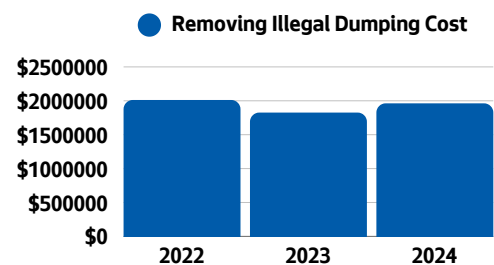


# Illegal Dumping

## Education & Enforcement

## What is its impact?

Illegal dumping is a serious problem. It creates health and safety risks, damages neighborhoods, and costs taxpayers and property owners millions. In 2024, Seattle allocated nearly **\$1.9 million to address cleanup efforts**. Our Illegal Dumping program responds to complaints through the Find It, Fix It app and proactively cleans hot spots across the city.



↑ 5.5% increase

## Outreach, Education, and Community Involvement

Many people are unaware of how illegal dumping and litter affect our community's health and environment. That's why we focus on education, prevention, and community outreach.

### Examples of preventable issues include:

- Leaving items like furniture on planting strips with "Free" signs, which often leads to more illegal dumping.
- Failing to cover trash and recycling containers, allowing litter to spread in the wind.

We encourage residents to join cleanup efforts like Adopt-a-Street and report illegal dumping to help maintain clean and healthy neighborhoods.

## Enforcement

Enforcement plays a key role in stopping illegal dumping. When violators face penalties, it sends a strong message that illegal dumping won't be tolerated. We inspect and investigate complaints, issue fines to offenders, and safely remove dumped waste. Our daily litter abatement routes, along with community partnerships, strengthen efforts to reduce illegal dumping and keep Seattle clean.

*\*percentage shown is compared to 2023 data*



Our illegal dumping education and enforcement program is a critical part of Seattle Clean City. Working in partnership with the community that reports illegal dumping to us, we can quickly remove items dumped illegally on the right of way. Doing so ensures sidewalks and other public spaces are free of debris and accessible to all and discourages additional dumping at the site. **Thank you for reporting this issue to Clean City via the Find It, Fix It application!**

**Tracy**  
Program Manager



## 2024 Impact

**504,360**

pounds of illegally dumped material removed and disposed.

↓ 31% decrease

**100%**

of verified illegal dumping complaints were responded to, and debris was removed within 10 days or less.

**22,467**

illegal dumping complaints received and processed.

↑ 9% increase

Illegal dumping complaints show a decrease in the total poundage but an increase in service requests (SRs). This could indicate that people are less inclined to dump large, bulky items like mattresses or furniture. Instead, we're seeing more requests for smaller items, such as bags of trash.



\*percentage shown is compared to 2023 data



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# Graffiti Abatement & Enforcement

## Who are the Graffiti Rangers?

The Graffiti Rangers, part of Mayor Harrell's One Seattle Graffiti Plan, work daily to remove graffiti and maintain clean, welcoming public spaces. They respond to graffiti abatement requests and conduct regular inspections to clean graffiti from public property and city assets.

### Graffiti Reporting and Response

The Graffiti Abatement Program addresses reports of graffiti on public property citywide. Service requests are dispatched to the appropriate departments within 48 hours. Each department aims to remove reported graffiti within 10 business days, ensuring timely cleanup to keep public spaces graffiti-free.

### Private Property Graffiti Enforcement

Under Seattle's Graffiti Nuisance Ordinance (adopted in 1994), property owners are required to remove graffiti promptly. Quick cleanup is essential to prevent graffiti from spreading across neighborhoods. Failure to comply can result in enforcement actions, as properties with unchecked graffiti may be deemed a public nuisance.

To assist property owners, we provide paint and other resources to support graffiti removal. Through our waiver program, SPU Graffiti Rangers and volunteers can also help paint over graffiti on private property, helping to maintain a cleaner and safer community.

***The Graffiti Abatement Program has transitioned to the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department.***

*The data presented in this report reflects information collected in 2024, when the program was part of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU).*







## 2024 Impact

The Graffiti Rangers removed graffiti covering

# 1,091,204

square feet of public property

↑ 25% increase

We received

# 27,582

an increase from the previous year due to community engagement with the Find It, Fix It application, allowing graffiti to be reported to us in a timely and efficient manner.

↑ 28% increase

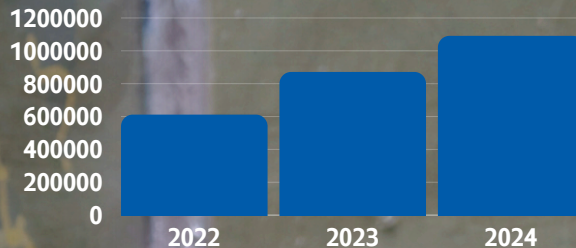
Our private property abatement waiver program added

# 269

new properties. These waivers allowed our Graffiti Rangers to assist in painting out graffiti on 424 private properties.

↓ 10% decrease

● Graffiti Removed (Sq. Ft.)



*\*percentages shown are compared to 2023 data*







# Litter Abatement

## Litter-Free Seattle

Our Litter Abatement Program (LAP) takes proactive measures to tackle litter and illegal dumping concerns in neighborhoods across Seattle. Through carefully planned routes, we target areas where litter, sharps, illegal dumping, and other debris accumulate in the public right-of-way. By doing so, we aim to maintain **clean** and **healthy neighborhoods** that residents can be proud of.

Our LAP services encompass a range of essential tasks:

- Cleaning up litter from streets and sidewalks.
- Addressing overflowing litter cans and collecting sharps.
- Removing bulky items and abandoned appliances from neighborhood cores and sidewalk areas.
- Providing outreach and education to retail and food service businesses and multifamily dwellings on proper food waste, recycling, composting, and garbage disposal practices.

By offering these services, LAP actively contributes to the upkeep and improvement of Seattle's neighborhoods, fostering a **cleaner** and **more sustainable environment** for **everyone**.

*Wow, **1.75 million pounds of litter removed** off streets and sidewalks in over 48 neighborhoods throughout 2024. However, I was surprised when I reviewed the 2024 Litter Abatement Program survey results. Only 36% of Seattle residents knew that Seattle Public Utilities proactively cleaned up litter and illegal dumping. My first step, was to create a dedicated Litter Abatement website where residents can view their neighborhood's litter abatement route and receive updates on clean up efforts.*

*Looking ahead to 2025, I am excited to discuss our Litter Abatement Routes at community and neighborhood events throughout Seattle. **See you soon!***



**Tracy**  
Program Manager





## 2024 Impact

We removed

**1,765,421**

pounds of debris from 1,550 blocks across the city's right-of-way

We operated

**48**

proactive routes

Since 2017, we collected

**9,439,489**

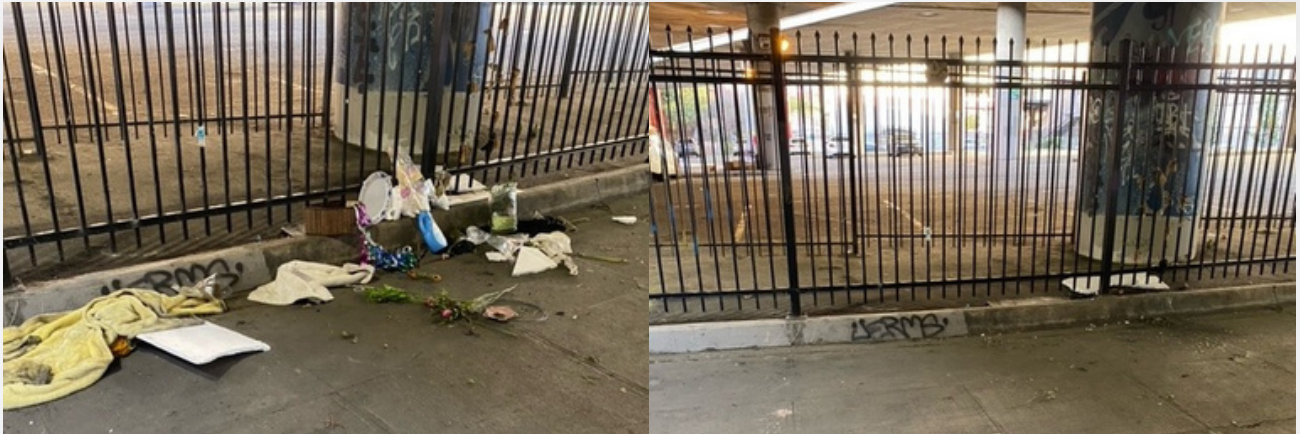
pounds of debris from Seattle's public areas.



7% decrease

*\*percentage shown is compared to 2023 data*

## Before & After



Seattle Public Utilities





# Public Place Litter & Recycling Cans

## Why public litter cans?

Our Public Place Litter & Recycling (PPLR) Cans program strategically places litter and recycling cans in or near neighborhood business districts. This reduces street litter and encourages proper disposal and recycling practices. Nearly all litter cans are paired with a recycling can to promote waste reduction.

### How the Program Works

We service over **1,145 public litter and recycling cans across Seattle**, in partnership with WM and Recology. Service levels vary between 3 to 14 times per week, depending on location needs. Key program activities include:

- Managing inventory and ensuring cans are well-maintained.
- Cleaning and performing regular upkeep.
- Providing timely pick-up services.
- Contract management to maintain service standards.
- Responding promptly to customer requests, complaints, and inquiries.

By combining effective placement, regular servicing, and strong customer support, the PPLR Cans program helps keep Seattle's streets clean and promotes sustainable waste management across our communities.



## 2024 Impact

New Can Placements:	12
Cans Removed:	15
Total Collections:	185,724







## 2024 Improvements

In 2024, we upgraded 100 older-style cans to key-locked cart-garage cans (standard graphics photo) in the neighborhoods of **Belltown, Hillman City, First Hill, Greenwood/Phinney Ridge, and Magnolia**. These new cans helped improve collection efficiency by addressing issues such as overflows, illegal dumping, and scattered litter.

Additionally, the key-locked cans installed in 2023 in the Chinatown-International District and Pioneer Square have **significantly reduced** instances of **illegal dumping, vandalism, and overflow scatter** throughout 2024.

**Jenny**  
Program Manager







# Sharps Collection

## How, where?

Our Sharps Collection Program is essential for maintaining the safety and health of the city by offering a secure disposal method for "sharps" such as needles, syringes, and lancets. The program ensures prompt removal of sharps from public property within 24 hours and provides accessible sharps disposal boxes throughout the city. Residents can safely and efficiently dispose of sharps, minimizing the risk of injury or illness for the public and sanitation workers.

There are currently **23 sharps disposal boxes** located across the city.

*This year, we held **12 sharps outreach events**, training **307 people** in safe sharps disposal.*

*Our survey revealed that **83% of the community supports** our cleanup efforts, with growing awareness of sharps disposal boxes. Respondents consistently expressed feeling safer in their neighborhoods, thanks to these resources. It's inspiring to see how our work is making a positive, lasting impact across the city.*



**Michael**  
Program Manager







## 2024 Impact

We collected

**803,578**

sharps from disposal boxes.

We received

**1,352**

requests for sharps pick ups resulting in

**3,569**

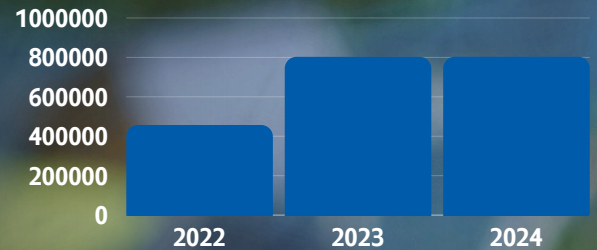
sharps collected.

**99%**

of those service requests received a response within a 24-hour timeframe

Additionally, we increased security at one needle box site to discourage vandalism and upgraded 2 more needle box sites with new models. Finally, we conducted 12 outreach events in the community, which trained 307 people in safe sharps disposal.

● # Sharps Collected



↑ 0.07% increase

*\*percentage shown is compared to 2023 data*







# Unsheltered Services

## How do we help?

Our Unsheltered Services focuses on serving the unsheltered community with programs that prioritize public health and minimize the environmental impacts of RV and tent encampment living. Our **RV Remediation**, **Geo Cleans**, and **Encampment Trash Programs** provide essential services that support the removal of garbage, debris, and spills generated by RV and tent encampments citywide. The program educates encampment residents on proper waste disposal, fosters sanitary living conditions, and promotes environmental sustainability.

We implement our programs and initiatives in partnership with the Seattle Unified Care Team (UCT), an interdepartmental team working to ensure Seattle's public spaces, sidewalks, and streets remain clean and accessible to all.

*Our Unsheltered Services programs made meaningful strides toward fostering cleaner and safer public spaces. Through efforts like Geo Cleans and encampment "Deep Cleaning" projects, we've seen **increased participation from unhoused neighbors**, who have played an active role in restoring right-of-way accessibility while maintaining their sense of ownership and dignity. One of our proudest moments this year was seeing how collaboration between RV residents, SPU teams, and community partners resulted in a significant **decrease in trash accumulation** at high-impact sites.*

*Looking ahead to 2025, our goal is to expand programs like the Vehicle Support Pilot, providing more robust services to RV residents and strengthening our partnerships to improve outcomes for both the community and the environment.*



**Curtis**  
Program Manager

\*The UCT comprises representatives from Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle Human Services Department (HSD), Seattle Police and Fire Departments, and Seattle Finance and Administrative Services (FAS).





## Encampment Trash Program

Our Encampment Trash Removal Program (ETP), also known as the **Purple Bag program**, offers proactive weekly garbage service to 30 selected unauthorized encampments. The primary objective is to manage garbage collection and enhance encampment conditions while mitigating public health and safety risks associated with community trash accumulation.

In partnership with contracted outreach partners, we distribute purple garbage bags to encampment residents. Our program activities include distributing designated purple garbage bags and collecting and disposing of garbage, bulky items, and hazardous materials. We collaborate closely with the Unified Care Team (UCT), community stakeholders, and advocates to tackle encampment trash issues.

Waste is collected weekly and situated at least 20 feet away from unauthorized encampments to avoid inadvertently collecting personal property. Additionally, the program involves site assessments, data collection, and outcome reporting to ensure effectiveness and accountability.

### 2024 Impact







## Geo Cleans

We conduct Geo Cleans to address growing community concerns associated with public health and safety risks involving clusters of RVs. This initiative provides a swift and consistent response to mitigate ongoing trash and debris from RVs located throughout City neighborhoods. The identified sites for Geo Clean routes are addressed weekly. The main objectives include improved access to the right-of-way and minimizing public health and safety hazards associated with RV camping.

### 2024 Impact





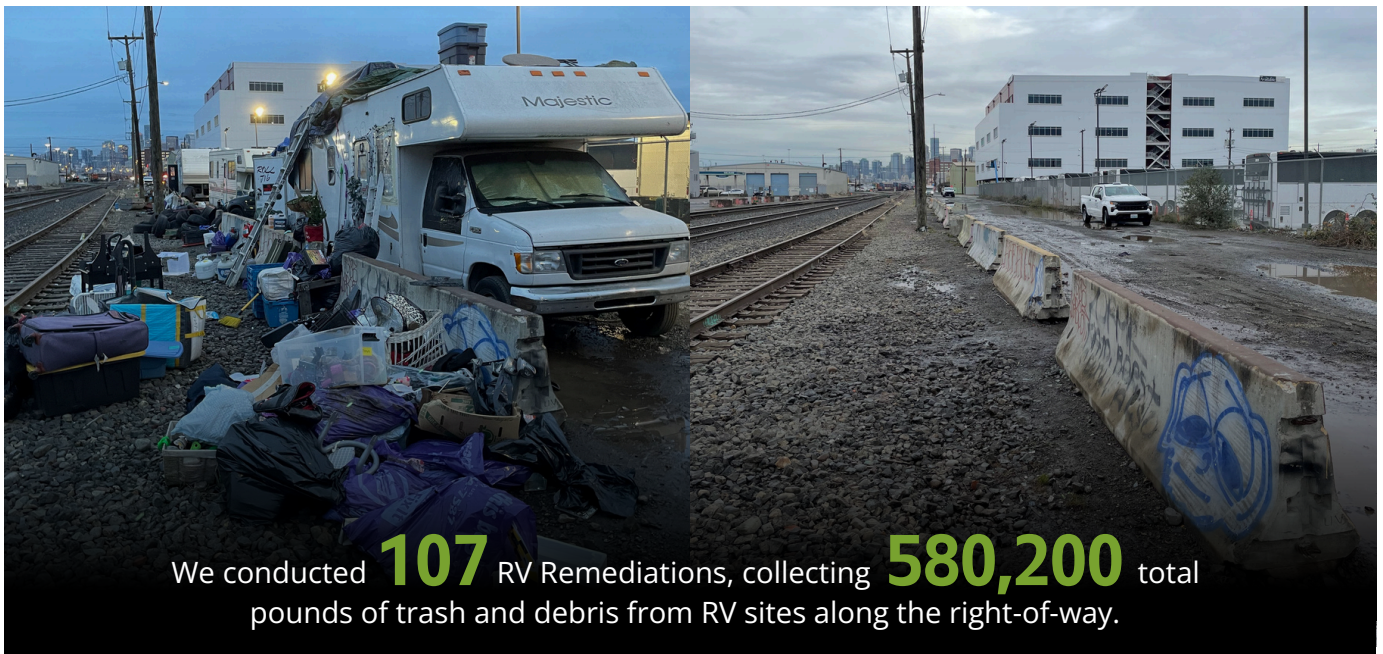


## RV Remediation

Our RV Remediation Program addresses the environmental and community health impacts of waste and debris produced by recreational vehicles (RVs) and other vehicles occupying the public right-of-way. Launched in 2018, these efforts are implemented by SPU and performed in collaboration with Seattle's Unified Care Team (UCT).

Our objectives include improving public access to the right-of-way, protecting environmental health by preventing trash, debris, and pollutants from entering our waterways, minimizing public health and safety hazards associated with RV camping, and providing a clean space to our neighbors.

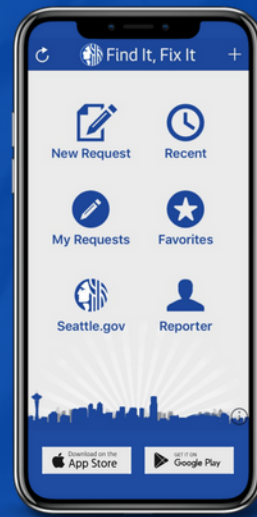
### 2024 Impact





# Help us keep Seattle clean and healthy!

Through Seattle's **Find It, Fix It (FIFI)** app, you can report needles, illegal dumping, graffiti, and much more. With Find It, Fix It, reporting an issue is as easy as snapping a photo with your smartphone, adding detailed information, and hitting submit. The map's "drag and drop" feature or the phone's own technology can be used to pinpoint the location. You can also report online at [seattle.gov/customer-service-bureau](http://seattle.gov/customer-service-bureau) and by phone at (206) 684-7587.



Download Find It, Fix It (FIFI)  
on [App Store](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/find-it-fix-it-fifi/id1444444444) or [Google Play](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.seattle.fifi).

## Contact Us!

Call Seattle Clean City at (206) 684-7587

For language interpretation, call (206) 684-3000

For historic landmark graffiti removal, call (206) 684-0228



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