



MaineDOT

ENGINEERING INSTRUCTION

Title: Murals, Artwork and Graffiti

Number: S4

Discipline: General Engineering

Originator: Benjamin W. Foster, P.E.

Approved By: Joyce Taylor, P.E., Chief Engineer

Issue Date: February 2020

Background:

MaineDOT receives several requests annually to apply murals or other painted artwork covering the surface of our structural infrastructure. Covering the surface reduced the ability to inspect the structures for cracks or other signs of deterioration or distress. When the covering starts to fade and peel, it becomes a maintenance liability.

Allowing the covering may bring forth potential of Freedom of Speech violations. What one person or group enjoys another may find offensive. The mural or artwork may also be a distraction to drivers.

Studies have shown that silanes help preserve concrete and reduce the acceleration of alkali-silica reactivity in structure with reactive aggregates by sealing the surface and allowing water in the concrete to escape. Covering the concrete surface reduces the effectiveness of the concrete to breathe and the Department's ability to preserve our assets.

Graffiti on MaineDOT buildings, bridges, and structures occurs throughout the state. It is impractical operationally and economically to think we can stop it from happening or remediate it all. The Department has acted when the graffiti is offensive. Title 17-A M.R.A. Section 806 Desecration and Defacement prohibits acts of graffiti on public property.

Applicability:

This policy applies to all artwork, murals and graffiti on all MaineDOT maintained buildings, bridges, or other structural assets.

Policy:

Murals, Artwork, and Concrete Painting

MaineDOT will not consider requests from applicants who wish to install murals, artwork, or concrete covering on buildings, bridges, and other structures maintained by MaineDOT unless the following criteria is met:

- The location is accessible to pedestrians.
- The speed of traffic able to view the mural, artwork or concrete painting is below 35 mph.
- The municipality where the mural, artwork or concrete painting brings forth the proposal and supports it through written correspondence.
- The MaineDOT Chief Engineer approves the location.

Graffiti

MaineDOT will remove graffiti, as practical operationally, when the content or message of the graffiti contains or meets the following criteria.

- Material that demeans or disparages an individual or group of individuals
- Material that contains an image or description of graphic violence
- Material that promotes or encourages unlawful or illegal behavior or activities
- Material with obscenity or images of nudity
- Material describing, depicting, or representing sexual activities or human anatomy in a way that the average adult, with contemporary community standards, would find appealing to the prurient interest of minors and adults in sex.

The graffiti will be remediated as soon as practical. It should be remediated in accordance with the guidance stated in Section 7 Activity 352 Graffiti Removal of the Bridge Maintenance Manual.

Responsibility:

Bridge Maintenance Engineer, Region Managers