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Alice graffiti crackdown

ALYSSA BETTS

July 22nd, 2009

A TERRITORY town's residents and businesses could be hit with hundreds of dollars in fines if they fail to clean up graffiti that vandals have sprayed on their properties.

Under draft bylaws to be considered by Alice Springs Town Council, people would be slapped with an initial fine of \$260 if they failed to remove the graffiti within a fortnight.

If, after the first fine, they still do not clean it off, they could be hit with a fine every day until they do.

And those caught in the act of doing graffiti could be slugged with a fine of \$1300.

Corporate and Community Services director Craig Catchlove said the move would help battle Alice's graffiti problems.

"If we want to get rid of graffiti, all the evidence suggests that if you get rid of it quickly, they lose (motivation)," he said.

Mr Catchlove (pictured) said council planned to distribute graffiti removal kits to help people.

Chamber of Commerce Alice Springs chairwoman Julie Ross said reaction from the business community would be mixed.

"I can understand why they're doing it - we do have a lot of graffiti," she said.

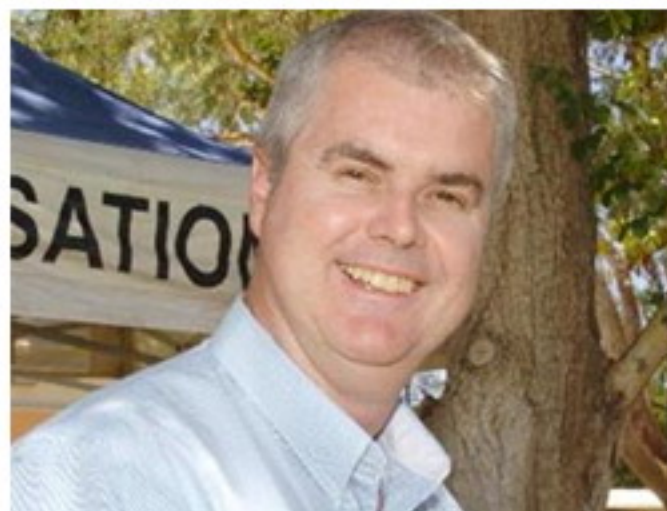
"But I can see the thinking being 'here we go, businesses are hit in the pocket again to recover the costs for this form of vandalism'. Particularly when you're the innocent victim."

It has been 22 years since Alice Springs council's public places bylaws were reviewed.

Under the draft bylaws, council would serve a notice requiring the owner or occupier of a private premises to remove graffiti that can be seen from a public place.

The council is due to consider the draft bylaws at its meeting this Monday.

Once that happens, the draft will go up for public consultation for 28 days.



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