



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 15, 2013

National Contact: Mark Saunders
202-268-6524
mark.r.saunders@usps.gov

Los Angeles: Richard Maher
323-586-1717
richard.j.maher@usps.gov

usps.com/news
Rel. No. 13-052



Postal Service Releases Top Dog Attack City Rankings *Collaboration Promotes National Dog Bite Prevention Week, May 19-25*

WASHINGTON — As a prelude to National Dog Bite Prevention Week, the Postal Service released its dog attack city rankings today and urged pet owners to help reduce the incidence of dog bites to letter carriers.

"If our letter carriers deem your loose dog to be a threat, you'll be asked to pick up your mail at the Post Office until it's safe to deliver," said Ken Snavelly, acting postmaster of Los Angeles, where 69 postal employees were attacked last year, placing the City of Angels as the most vicious for dog attacks. Nationwide, 5,879 postal employees were attacked.

Snavelly noted that in situations where a dog roams the neighborhood, delivery to the owner's neighbors could be curtailed as well. Additionally, when letter carriers come to a customer's door, pet owners are asked to place dogs in a separate room and close the door, as many canines have been known to jump through screen and glass doors.

Dog attacks are a nationwide issue and not just a postal problem. Nearly 5,900 letter carriers were attacked last year, but that pales in comparison to the 4.7 million Americans annually bitten by dogs — more than half of whom are children — according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov). The U.S. Postal Service, the medical community, veterinarians and the insurance industry are working together to educate the public that dog bites are avoidable by declaring May 19-25 as National Dog Bite Prevention Week.

"Many dogs are cherished members of their family and people believe their dog won't bite, but given the right circumstances, any dog can attack," said Snavelly. "Dogs do not reason like people do and they will react to their instinct to protect their family and territory. Working with animal behavior experts, the Postal Service has developed tips to avoid dog attacks, and for dog owners, tips for practicing responsible pet ownership."

How to be a Responsible Dog Owner

- Obedience training can teach dogs proper behavior and help owners control their dogs in any situation.
- Dogs can be protective of their territory and may interpret the actions of a letter carrier as a threat. Please take precautions when accepting mail in the presence of your pet.
- When a letter carrier comes to your home, keep your dog inside, away from the door, in another room or on a leash.
- Dogs that haven't been properly socialized, receive little attention or handling, or are left

tied up for long periods of time frequently turn into biters.

Fiscal Year 2012 U.S. Postal Service Dog Attack City Ranking

Ranking	City, State	Attacks
1	Los Angeles, CA	69
2	San Antonio, TX and Seattle, WA	42
3	Chicago, IL	41
4	San Francisco, CA	38
5	Philadelphia, PA	34
6	Detroit, MI	33
7	St. Louis, MO	32
8	Baltimore, MD and Sacramento, CA	29
9	Houston, TX and Minneapolis, MN	27
10	Cleveland and Dayton, OH	26
11	Buffalo and Brooklyn, NY	24
12	Denver, CO	23
13	Dallas, TX and Tacoma, WA	21
14	Wichita, KS	20

The National Dog Bite Prevention Week partners offer the following tips:

Avoiding Attacks

- Never leave a baby or small child alone with a dog.
- Don't run past a dog. The dog's natural instinct is to chase and catch you.
- If a dog threatens you, don't scream. Avoid eye contact. Try to remain motionless until the dog leaves, then back away slowly until the dog is out of sight.
- Never approach a strange dog, especially one that's tethered or confined.
- Don't disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating or caring for puppies.
- Anyone wanting to pet a dog should first obtain permission from the owner.
- Always let a dog see and sniff you before petting the animal.
- If you believe a dog is about to attack you, try to place something between yourself and the dog, such as a backpack or a bicycle.
- If you are knocked down by a dog, curl into a ball and protect your face with your hands.

The Postal Service; the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), aap.org; the American Humane Association (AHA) americanhumane.org, the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery (ASRM), microsurg.org; the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), avma.org; the Insurance Information Institute (III), iii.org; State Farm Insurance, statefarm.com; and Prevent The Bite (PTB), preventthebite.org, are driving home the message that dog bites are a nationwide issue and that education can help prevent dog attacks to people of all ages.

Advice from the Experts

Note: Journalists are encouraged to contact National Dog Bite Prevention Week partners for in-depth interviews.

American Academy of Pediatricians

"Parents, please don't ever leave a young child unsupervised around any dog, even a dog well-known to your family," said AAP President Dr. Robert Block. "Even very young children should be taught not to tease or hurt animals. And with school almost over for the year, children will be spending more time in parks, at friends' homes, and other places where they may encounter dogs. They need to know what to do to minimize the risk of being bitten." *Contact: Gina Steiner, gsteiner@aap.org, aap.org, 847-434-7945.*

American Humane Association

Children should be taught to never approach an unfamiliar dog. Infants and young children should

never be left alone with any dog; interactions between children and dogs should always be monitored to ensure safety for both the dog and the child. Children should be taught to treat the dog with respect and not engage in rough or aggressive play. American Humane Association has a brochure “Pet Meets Baby”, available for families with infants, that is available online americanhumane.org/assets/pdfs/interaction/pet-meets-baby-2013.pdf and offers many helpful tips. Contact Mark Stubis, marks@americanhumane.org, americanhumane.org 202-677-4227.

American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery

“Most children love dogs and like to put their face up close to the dog’s face. Parents should never permit this,” said Dr. Joseph Serletti, president of the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery. “Even the friendliest dog may bite when startled or surprised. Be cautious, once a child is scarred they are scarred for life. We hear this line all the time ‘The dog has never bitten anyone before’. A dog’s reaction to being surprised or angered is not predictable.” *Contact: Krista Greco, kristagreco@isms.org, microsurg.org, 312-456-9579.*

American Veterinary Medical Association

Any dog can bite. Protect your family and community and the welfare of dogs with early education programs. The Blue Dog Parent Guide and CD is targeted and tested for children from 3 to 6 years old and is intended as a tool to be incorporated as part of a more comprehensive prevention program. Visit avma.org/dogbite for information on dog bite prevention material from the AVMA and its National Dog Bite Prevention Week partners. *Contact: Sharon Granskog; sgranskog@avma.org, avma.org, 847-285-6619.*

Insurance Information Institute

Dog bites account for more than a third of all homeowners’ insurance liability claims, according to the Insurance Information Institute (III). Homeowners and renters insurance policies typically cover dog bite liability if your dog injures another person or damages someone else’s property. The best way to protect yourself is to prevent your dog from biting anyone in the first place. *Contact: Justin Shaddix (national) justins@iii.org, iii.org, 212-346-5522.*

Prevent The Bite

A nonprofit organization devoted to keeping children safe from dog bites, Prevent The Bite meets the national standards of education, and makes it possible for anyone to teach children how to avoid being bitten. Dog attack victim Kelly Voigt is available for interviews. *Contact: Kathy Voigt, kathy@preventthebite.org, preventthebite.org, 847-223-5084*

State Farm Insurance

As the nation’s largest property and casualty insurer in the country, State Farm understands the damage that a dog bite can do. In 2012, the company paid more than \$136 million dollars as a result of nearly 4,500 dog bite claims. There are good dogs and bad dogs within every breed, just as there can be responsible and irresponsible owners. State Farm does not refuse insurance based on the breed of dog a customer owns in the United States. Instead, we urge owners to be responsible with their pets. Visit learningcenter.statefarm.com/ for information on keeping your family and pets safe. *Contact: Holly Anderson; holly.anderson.m3mj@statefarm.com; statefarm.com; 309-735-7745*

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

###

Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at about.usps.com/news/welcome.htm.

For reporters interested in speaking with a regional Postal Service public relations professional, please go to

about.usps.com/news/media-contacts/usps-local-media-contacts.pdf.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation: 152 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With more than 31,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, usps.com, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private-sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 42nd in the 2012 Fortune 500. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for seven years and the fourth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

Follow the Postal Service on twitter.com/USPSStamps and like us at facebook.com/USPSStamps