

Even Good Dogs Have Bad Days

(NAPS)—If you are or care for a dog owner, here's a statistic you do not want to be part of: More than 5,300 Postal Service employees were attacked by dogs while delivering the mail last year.

To keep its workers safe, the USPS offers dog owners advice during the annual National Dog Bite Awareness Week, Sunday, June 4, through Saturday, June 10. This year's theme is "Even good dogs have bad days."

Pet Owners Can Help Support Safe Mail Delivery

Many attacks reported by letter carriers came from dogs whose owners regularly stated, "My dog won't bite." Dog bites are preventable and one bite is one too many.

Dogs are generally protective of their turf and dog owners have an important responsibility to control them to ensure safe mail delivery.

When a letter carrier comes to your home, keep dogs:

- Inside the house or behind a fence;
- Away from the door or in another room; or
- On a leash.

Pet owners also should remind children not to take mail directly from a letter carrier as the dog may view the carrier as a threat to the child.

Inform Yourself,

See the Mail Before It Arrives

Fortunately, dog owners can anticipate when their carrier will arrive. By using Informed Delivery, a free USPS service at informedelivery.usps.com, you can digitally preview incoming mail and packages from a computer, tablet or mobile device.

How to Avoid Dog Bites

Letter carriers are trained to observe an area where they know dogs may be present. They are taught to be alert for potentially dangerous conditions and to respect a dog's territory.

You can protect yourself and your family if you behave like letter carriers, who are trained to:

- Not startle a dog;
 - Keep their eyes on any dog;
 - Never assume a dog will not bite;
 - Make some noise or rattle a fence to alert a dog if entering a yard;
 - Never attempt to pet or feed a dog; and
 - Place their foot against an outward swinging door to prevent a dog from escaping.
- If a dog attacks, stand your ground and protect your body by placing



Gaithersburg, MD, letter carrier Hugues Pointe Jour takes a protective stance against an approaching dog.

something between you and the dog—such as a mail satchel—and use dog repellent, if necessary.

Even though postal officials ask customers to control their dogs, bites still happen and may result in injuries to carriers and costly medical expenses for dog owners.

How Else Carriers Protect Themselves

Carriers have tools to alert them to dogs on their routes. A dog alert feature on carriers' handheld scanners can remind them of a possible dog hazard, and dog warning cards may be used during mail sorting to alert carriers to routes where a dog may interfere with delivery.

Lastly, when a carrier feels unsafe, mail service could be halted—not only for the dog owner, but for the entire neighborhood. When mail service is stopped, mail must be picked up at the Post Office. Service will not be restored until the aggressive dog is properly restrained.

Understanding The USPS

The United States Postal Service is an independent federal establishment, mandated to be self-financing and to serve every American community through the affordable, dependable, and secure delivery of mail and packages to nearly 165 million addresses six and often seven days a week. The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products, and services to fund its operations.

Learn More

For further information, visit usps.com and facts.usps.com.