



U.S. Postal Service Offers Tips To Stop Dog Attacks On Mail Carriers

(NAPS)—Can you picture a member of your family attacking a mail carrier? Of course, you couldn't, but it happened 5,803 times last year across the nation.

Dearborn, MI, Letter Carrier Tameka Toliver recalls being pinned on a porch by a dog that bit her above her knee. "It happened so fast, even with all my training, I barely had time to react," Toliver told co-workers at an event at the Dearborn Post Office. "I'm still scared when I get close to that house because I remember the attack so vividly. It takes a long time to get over the fear."

When a dog attacks a letter carrier, the dog owner could be held liable for all medical expenses, repayment of lost work hours, replacement of the uniform and other costs, which can run into thousands of dollars. The Postal Service places the safety of its employees as a top priority and dedicates a week each year to Dog Bite Awareness. (about.usps.com/what/corporate-social-responsibility/activities/dog-bite-awareness.htm)

Here are four simple tips to prevent dog bite injuries that should be enforced all year round:

- **Door Delivery:** If a carrier delivers mail or packages to your front door, place your dog in a separate room and close that door before opening the front door. Some dogs burst through screen doors or plate-glass windows to attack visitors. Dog owners should keep the family pet secured. Parents should remind their children and other family members not to take mail directly from carriers in the presence of the family pet, as the dog may view the person handing mail to a family member as a threatening gesture.

- **Electronic Fencing:** Carriers may assume, when they see no physical fence around a property, the property is animal-free. This can be a dangerous mistake. Postal officials request that you keep your dog restrained or inside when the mail is delivered. Although the electronic fence may keep your dog from wandering, it does not protect your Postal Service carrier, who must enter your property to deliver the mail. Even homes with curbside mailboxes may have oversized packages or



Contain your canine, keep carriers safe.

signature-needed items that require the carrier to approach a doorstep and cross the boundaries of the electronic fence. This poses a serious risk to carrier safety.

- **Dog in Yard:** Make sure your dog is properly restrained on a leash away from where your mail carrier is delivering the mail. Mail delivery service can be interrupted at an address or neighborhood the carrier deems unsafe because of an unrestrained dog. When service is interrupted at an address or neighborhood, all parties involved will have to pick up mail at their local Post Office. Service will be restored once assurance has been given that the animal will be confined during regular delivery hours.

- **Tracking:** Dog owners who have access to postal notification features such as Informed Delivery (informedelivery.usps.com) for letter mail and package tracking are urged to use this as a way to gauge when the carrier is on the way and to ensure the dog is properly restrained. Expecting a postal package delivery on Sunday? Postal officials urge dog owners to restrain their animals on Sundays as well, as more residences are receiving deliveries throughout the weekend.