



Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust

A MINI TRAINING SESSION FOR INJURY PREVENTION

Quick Take on Safety

Dog Bite Prevention

TRAINING OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

- Overview: This training discusses methods to identify hazardous dogs and responses if a dog attacks.
- Purpose: This training is designed to refresh employees about dog-related hazards and methods to avoid them with the goal to reduce dog bites.
- Preparation: Read and become familiar with this Quick Take. *Change as needed to reflect procedures and personnel in your department.*
- Handouts: Quick Review of Safety—Dog Bite Prevention

Dog Hazards

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- About 4.5 million people are bitten by dogs in the United States each year.
- Of those bitten, approximately one in five (885,000) requires medical attention.

[*Instructor Prompt:* Ask staff how many of them have had encounters with dogs or been unsure if a dog was present or aggressive.]

Prevention

Dogs can bite regardless of breed, size, sex or age. Dog-bite prevention begins before you encounter a dog. Think prevention when setting up the appointment, before exiting the vehicle, after seeing a dog and during any dog attack. Dog bites can be serious, but with proper preparation and understanding of prevention techniques, you can avoid or control the severity of a bite.

Your health and safety is important to us, we don't want you to get hurt.

Setting up the Appointment

- Ask whether an individual has dogs.
- If there is a pet, ask the owner to have the dog secured, regardless of how friendly the owner claims the dog is. [*Instructor Prompt:* Discuss scenarios with employees and affirm actions that should be taken in the event they are uncomfortable with the visit]

Before Exiting a Vehicle

- Check for dogs outside of the home or others nearby.
- Look for food bowls, dog houses, paths worn into the grass, feces, toys or other signs of a dog.
 - If signs of a dog are present, whistle or call out for the dog to draw him or her out.

- If you see signs of a dog, carry a flexible bag, briefcase, towel, jacket, umbrella or other item that can be used as a shield between yourself and the dog. [*Instructor Prompt: What objects does everyone carry that could be used as a shield?*]

Once a Dog Has Been Observed

- Determine if the dog is safely secured.
 - Are chains and fences secure and high enough to contain the dog?
 - Are chains or leashes short enough to allow you to pass by without the dog reaching you?
- Observe the dog for signs of aggressive behavior. Signs of aggressive behavior can include:
 - Head up
 - Ears erect
 - Lips puckered or lifted
 - Growling and snarling when approached
 - Tense body
 - Staring with direct eye contact
 - Hair standing up on back
 - A raised, possibly quivering, tail
- If signs of aggressive behavior are identified:
 - Do not make eye contact with the dog and do not turn your back on the dog.
 - Slowly turn to let your side face the dog and slowly back away toward your vehicle or nearest barrier.
 - If the dog approaches, stop and wait. Then slowly start to retreat again.
 - Keep a briefcase or other soft object at waist level between yourself and the dog.
 - Call the owner to restrain the dog.
- If no signs of aggressive behavior are identified, keep plenty of space between yourself and the dog and monitor the dog for changing behavior. If the dog approaches, say, “No!” or “Go home!” in a firm voice.

If Attacked

With a soft object:

- Present the soft object for the dog to grab.
- Shake and pull the object while the dog attacks and move back to safety.
- Let the dog have the object when you enter the vehicle.

Without a soft object:

- Stand quietly, and do not attempt to fight. This will likely provoke the dog to continue to attack.
- Place your hands in fists around your head and neck for protection, slowly turn your side to the dog and move back to safety.

If knocked down:

- Lie prone in the fetal position (knees curled to chest, head and arms curled to chest) and remain quiet. Place hands and fists around your head and neck for protection.
- Wait until the dog leaves or you are rescued.

If Bitten

- Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water.
- Seek medical attention if the bite is deep or if the dog was acting strangely.
- Report the incident to your supervisor and complete any applicable incident forms.

Discussion Question

- How can we best prevent dog bites when working?

Additional Activity

Ask for volunteers to role-play situations discussed in this Quick Take.

Dog Bite Prevention Session

Planning and Review

Trainer

Training Date

Department(s)

TRAINING GOALS

- Employees understand the importance of prior planning in dog bite prevention.
- Employees are aware of the signs of a dog's presence.
- Employees know how to respond when attacked by dogs.
- Employees understand the importance and process for treating and reporting dog bites.

RESOURCES

- Hawaiian Humane Society/Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust, "Be Canine Smart: Dog Bite Prevention Program," Request no-cost materials from MCIT at 1.866.547.6516 or info@mcit.org.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Preventing Dog Bites," CDC.gov

REVIEW

Did the training meet the stated goals?

How can the training be improved?

TRAINER COMMENTS

