

AGGRESSIVE DOGS: WARNING SIGNS



Ranger Services

Forrest Road, PO Box 369,
CAPEL WA 6271

Ph: (08) 97272030

Fax: (08) 9727 2603

E-Mail: ranger@capel.wa.gov.au

Website: www.capel.wa.gov.au

All dogs must be registered with Council from the age of three months.

SOME COMMON MYTHS ABOUT DOG ATTACKS

MYTH1

Only certain breeds of dogs will attack people.

FALSE! Any age, breed, sex and size of dog may bite. Some dogs, or breeds of dogs may be more likely to bite than others if not socialized, trained and controlled properly.

MYTH2

Only cross breeds will bite.

FALSE! Pedigree dogs will bite for the same reasons as cross breeds and as often.

MYTH3

A dog that attacks livestock or other animals is always a danger to people as well.

FALSE! Not all dogs which attack other animals are dangerous to people. However, in a rural shire the likelihood of the dog attacking animals again is very high.

MYTH4

Dogs only attack if a person has provoked a dog by teasing or cruelty.

FALSE! Dog attacks can be provoked accidentally, and the victim is not always to blame.

MYTH5

Dogs will bite people if they are fed fresh meat.

FALSE! A dog's diet will not make it attack people.

MYTH6

It is normal for a dog to growl or snap at you or other people occasionally.

FALSE! This is an early warning sign of aggression and must be taken seriously. Professional advice should be sought immediately.

RECOGNIZING THE EARLY SIGNS OF AGGRESSION

Does your dog ever tense up, stare, raise its hackles, growl, lift its lips or snap when:

- ◆ eating or when food is around?
- ◆ its ears, paws, tail or belly are touched?
- ◆ someone goes near its bed or toys?
- ◆ someone tries to move the dog from a comfortable spot?
- ◆ it is told off?
- ◆ someone grabs the dog, or tries to pick it up?
- ◆ it is approached by other people, children or dogs?

Does your dog lunge out at people or dogs when out walking?

Does your dog rush out barking and growling at passers-by?

IF YOU ANSWER “YES” to any of these situations, then your dog may be aggressive. These are the early warning signs. You need to seek professional advice, as your dog's

behaviour is likely to get worse, not better, with time. Don't wait until someone has been seriously bitten. The sooner you seek help, the more easily the problem can be solved.

Does your dog get very nervous, cower away or try to run away from children, adults or other dogs?

IF "YES" your dog could be dangerous if it ever feels threatened or cornered, and may attack out of fear. You need to seek professional advice to help your dog overcome its fear.

If you are concerned about your dog's behaviour please consult your veterinarian, who may be able to help you, or refer you to an animal behaviourist. Your dog may also require further obedience and socialization training.