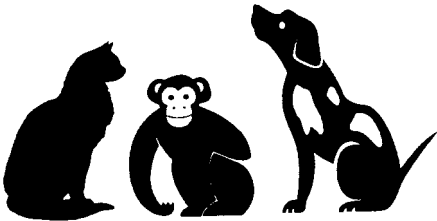


**ANIMAL-RELATED
PUBLIC SAFETY TIPS**

1. Never approach a strange animal whose temperament is unknown.
2. Teach children how to respectfully interact with animals and how to respond when stray animals approach.
3. Look for signs that an animal is around, example--“Beware of Dog” signs, dog houses, etc.
4. Report dogs traveling in groups or “packs”.
5. Keep a safe distance from fenced yards or parked cars occupied by dogs. Some dogs may try to escape containment if agitated.
6. Do not surprise, attempt to scare or tease an animal.
7. If threatened, remain calm and face the animal. Shield yourself and give firm verbal commands for the animal to “STOP”, “GO HOME”, or say “NO”. Do not look/stare directly into the animal’s eyes. Instead, proceed to carefully back away from the animal.
8. If a bite or scratch occurs, remember as many details as possible about the animal, example--breed, color, size, collar, time and location. Report incidents to 911 Police.
9. Have your community leader contact Animal Control to arrange for a guest speaker who can speak with members of your community about “Staying Safe Around Animals”. Call (410) 222-8900 for more information.
10. Have a teacher contact Animal Control’s Humane Education Program Director (Candi Nilsson 1-410-643-1323) for classroom instruction on “Staying Safe Around Animals”.



*Please be a responsible and considerate
pet owner.*

Anne Arundel County

**ANIMAL CONTROL’S
PUBLIC SAFETY LAW**

Article 12. Title 4

**Keeping the Citizens and Pets of
Anne Arundel County Safe from
Aggressive Animals**

**Anne Arundel County Police Department
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL**

**411 Maxwell Frye Road
Millersville, Maryland 21108
410-222-8900**

Your Local Animal Services Center

In September, 2001 Animal Control laws established in the County Code under Article 12--Animals, added a new title ordinance-- Title 4 Public Safety. Title 4 provides enforcement actions designed to manage aggressive animals while holding irresponsible owners of these animals accountable for the public safety threats they create in our communities.

This brochure will define a public safety threat and the methods used by Animal Control to investigate and establish control measures on an animal. This brochure will also serve to educate and empower victims of animal bites through an understanding of their rights and options.

It is not the intent of Animal Control to impound and destroy aggressive animals. It is not illegal to own them. It is illegal to "irresponsibly" manage an aggressive animal, allowing it, through direct or indirect means to threaten or injure people or their pets. When irresponsible owners decide to own and mismanage aggressive animals in Anne Arundel County, they will now be held to a higher level of responsibility, bearing stiffer consequences.

A Public Safety Threat is defined as:

(A) An animal poses a threat to public safety if the animal:

- (1) Inflicts a severe injury to a person;
- (2) Bites a person;
- (3) Kills or inflicts severe injury to a domestic animal;
- (4) Attacks a person;
- (5) Without provocation, chases or approaches a person in an attitude of attack;
- (6) Engages in encouraged dog fighting activity or shows evidence of having been engaged in encouraged dog fighting activity.

State law requires that ALL animal bites or scratches that break the skin of a person be reported to the local Police Department. In addition to the quarantine or testing of an animal to protect public health, Animal Control must determine if the animal poses a threat to public safety.

Through Animal Control, bite reports or complaints of animal bites or aggressive acts by animals shall be thoroughly investigated by the Agency's Bite Investigation Unit. Once an investigation is complete, appropriate conditions may be imposed against the owner to control the animal. This is done through the imposition of a "Dangerous" or "Potentially Dangerous" Order that establishes conditions to eliminate the public safety risk the animal imposes.

Under Title 4 - Public Safety Law states:

- (B) The Agency may designate an animal that poses a threat to public safety as Potentially Dangerous.
- (C) The Agency may designate an animal as Dangerous if:
- (1) The animal inflicts severe injury to a person; or
 - (2) The animal is Potentially Dangerous and again engaged in behavior that poses a threat to public safety.

A Dangerous or Potentially Dangerous Order will be imposed along with a set of conditions which include some or all of the following:

- (1) Manage the animal and its environment in a manner that will abate the animal's problem.
- (2) Spay or Neuter the animal.

- (3) Implant the animal with a microchip containing owner identification information.
- (4) Obtain an insurance policy providing for protection for bite victims in a minimum of \$300,000.
- (5) Remove the animal from the custody of an individual less than 21 years old.
- (6) For a rental property, obtain the written permission of the landlord to maintain the animal on the property.
- (7) Confine the animal to a structure of a size and type specified by the Agency.
- (8) Maintain the Animal exclusively on the owner's property except for medical treatment or examination; or
- (9) Muzzle or leash the animal as required by the Agency.

If it is determined by the Agency that the safety of the public will remain in jeopardy during the investigation process, the animal may be impounded until the investigation is complete and any conditions established are complied with. The animal may remain impounded if the owner elects to appeal the Agency's decision rather than comply with the Order imposed. The first level of appeal is before the Animal Control Commission, followed by the Board of Appeals and finally, Circuit Court. Victims and witnesses may be called upon to testify throughout the appeal process.

What Victims Can Do:

If you are involved in or are witness to a public safety incident, you should:

- Call 911 Police immediately if you have been bitten or scratched.
- Call Animal Control at (410) 222-8900 to report an immediate animal related public safety situation where the animal is at large. Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. (911 Police after hours)

Victims may elect to:

- Submit a letter of complaint or contact Animal Control by phone advising that a public safety situation occurred or that a public safety situation exists. Complaint information must be accurate and fall in accordance with public safety definitions.
- File an affidavit of complaint which assesses a fine for a public safety violation against the animal owner. (Note: for an affidavit to be filed and served by Animal Control, owner and complainant name, telephone number and address must be indicated. The owner may appeal the citation).

To find out more about Title 4 - Public Safety in the Animal Control Article, or if you have additional questions, call Animal Control (410) 222-8900.