

## RISING NUMBER OF ANIMAL BITES

As the number of animal bites to people and their pets has increased, it has become more apparent that some of these cases could have been avoided. Pet owners must be more aware of their pet's attitudes and behaviors, which could be dangerous to the public. The behaviors that seem cute during the animals growing years such as growling, nipping and dominant behavior, become extremely dangerous as the animal grows. Pet owners should be aware and are responsible for their pet's behavior. It is best not to put your pet in situations that would cause a rise in their stress level and ultimately result in dangerous behavior such as biting. It does not matter if your pet bites in fear or aggression, it is still unacceptable behavior.

People should use caution when approaching or being approached by an animal. Even if you know the pet, it is still not a guarantee that the animal is safe to approach or handle. Many people are bitten by animals they know. If you are bitten or threaten by a neighbor's pet, you should contact the Police or Animal Control Officer. These people are trained to handle these situations.

Frequently, while investigating bite cases, Officers find there are previous incidents that went unreported because people did not want to be "bad neighbors". It would be a much better situation if the pet owner is assisted or educated in control of their animal before a serious bite occurs. Any dog owner who is considering the installation of an "invisible" fence unit should make sure that the "fence" line is set back and appropriate distance from the public right-of-way. Fence lines that are installed too close to the right-of-way will cause a dangerous situation for motor vehicles, pedestrians and your pet.