

Is My Dog Dangerous?

Both New York State and local law have restrictions on dangerous dogs. A dog that bites someone may be declared dangerous but a dog that threatens or intimidates a person to the degree that a reasonable person feels that he is at risk of being bitten can also be declared dangerous.

Tickets can be issued for local municipal violations. A court appearance will be necessary and fines may result.

New York State has a dangerous dog hearing procedure that can result in a court appearance. If a dog is found to meet the criteria for a dangerous dog in New York State the court may impose restrictions on how a dog is maintained as well as other serious penalties.

Harboring a dangerous dog can result in lawsuits that can be very costly. It is important to maintain all dogs in a safe and secure manner to both protect the public and the dog.

Dogs should never be allowed to run at large. What a dog is doing or what is happening to a dog when you are not there leaves too much risk for all concerned.

Most dog bites to strangers occur as a person is entering the property either into the home or onto the property. If your dog barks at people, rushes at people or threatens in any way strangers this behavior can lead to more aggressive actions as time goes on.

Electric fences work fine for some dogs but are particularly dangerous when the dog, so confined, is exhibiting aggressive behavior. A stranger may be cautious when opening a fence gate but if there is no such barrier he may find himself well into the dog's property before he meets an aggressive dog. Every year there are bites to people in just such a scenario.

How a dog acts with the family, people he knows, and other animals he is familiar with, is not indicative of the way he will behave in the presence of strangers. Many people are shocked when their dog is accused of aggressive or dangerous behavior especially if they are not there to see it.

Pets are members of our family and it is difficult sometimes to consider the fact that, beloved as they may be, we should still keep in mind that they are, in fact, animals.

For questions call Catherine Crawmer, Animal Control Officer 477-8230