

Take 'Em Out in Cuffs!

But... don't use my name. As a matter of fact, I'm not giving you my name either. I'm an anonymous caller. Whatever I tell you is the absolute truth. Now go and arrest them. Take their dog away from them and give them a hefty fine. They deserve it. Everybody on the block says so. After all, there are laws! You are the animal control officer. Go get 'em. Click! They hang up. The call is made from a blocked number.

How common is this type of communication? Very common. Messages such as this are also sent by email and left on the answering machine. They almost always mention that there are laws. That much is correct. There are laws. One important law says that there must be a witness to a violation of the law before a ticket is issued and the subsequent court appearance.

If a dog is barking and keeping you up all night, running at large, destroying your property or attempting to attack your family and you are a witness to it there is a legal procedure in place to address the problem. This is as it should be. Without it, false accusations and vendetta-based complaints would fill the courts. With no witness to substantiate the complaint the court would promptly dismiss the claim. A waste of time for all concerned!

If you have a problem with your neighbor it may be a good idea to talk to your neighbor first. If no remedy can be found call your municipal animal control officer for information on other options. Give the officer your name and contact information and then tell the truth without embellishment. There are laws but you can't accomplish anything if your primary concern is hiding your identity.

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