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NEWS

City of St. Louis Department of Health



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National Dog Bite Prevention Week 2014

SAINT LOUIS—As designated by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the week of May 18th-May 24th marks National Dog Bite Prevention Week.

Dog bites remain a threat in our communities, to both people and companion animals. According to the AVMA, there are 4.5 million dog bites that take place in the United States every year. In 2013, 315 confirmed animal bites were reported to City of St. Louis Animal Care and Control, and there have been 127 confirmed animal bite cases in 2014.

Children are particularly vulnerable to dog bites. The AVMA states that children are the most common victims of dog bites, and they are also more likely to be severely injured from a dog bite. The AVMA adds that children are most often bit by dogs during everyday activities and, most importantly, children are most often bit by dogs that are familiar to them.

However, similar to the AVMA, Health Director Pamela Walker, who also oversees Animal Care and Control, suggests that most dog bites are preventable. Additionally, dog bites are commonly caused by owned pets, rather than strays.

“Responsible pet ownership, including keeping your dog on a leash and not letting dogs roam at large, is key in preventing dog bites,” says Walker. “Our Animal Care and Control Officers take the enforcement of these ordinances very seriously in order to protect our communities and public safety.” Walker also emphasizes the importance of pet owners ensuring that all pets have rabies vaccinations, and that those vaccinations are up-to-date.

During National Dog Bite Prevention Week, City of St. Louis Animal Care and Control will be posting tips daily on their Facebook page www.facebook.com/ACC.STL. On Tuesday, May 20th, Animal Care and Control staff will be available in the lobby at 1520 Market Street from 11am-2pm to distribute information about dog bite prevention, as well as answer any questions from citizens.

Citizens are also encouraged to report aggressive or dangerous animals in the community. Reports can be made to the Citizen’s Service Bureau at 314-622-4800. If you or someone you know experiences a dog bite, seek any necessary medical attention and then report the bite to the Citizen’s Service Bureau. Reports can also be made to the Citizen’s Service Bureau on the web at <http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/public-safety/neighborhood-stabilization-office/citizens-service-bureau/>.

For more information and additional resources on dog bites and prevention, please visit the AVMA website at <https://www.avma.org/Events/pethealth/Pages/Dog-Bite-Prevention-Week.aspx>.

For more information about the efforts of Animal Care and Control to prevent and address animal bites, contact Stacie Zellin at zellins@stlouis-mo.gov.

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