



UAA
UTILITY ARBORIST ASSOCIATION

ADAPTED BY THE UTILITY
ARBORIST ASSOCIATION
*with special thanks to Hector
Hernandez (Canine Man)*

DOG BITE PREVENTION

Most of us live in close contact with dogs – up to 38% of US households are home to one or more dogs. Dogs can pose a risk to utility arborists on a job site. If you are working near a home or other private property you can take steps to make yourself more secure on the job. First, assess the area for signs that a dog may be on the property – a doghouse, chain, a worn path near the fence, et cetera. Then, follow the steps on the right.



PROTECTING YOURSELF AGAINST A DOG ENCOUNTER AND ATTACK

1. It is the owner's job to manage and control the dog. It's best not to enter the area until a dog is in a safe location or restrained. If at any time your safety is at risk, leave the property.
2. Do not pet dogs even if they appear friendly; owners may have disciplined using hands, making dogs think hands are weapons.
3. Even dogs that seem friendly or have no history of aggression can be dangerous if they feel threatened. It's not your job to make friends with dogs. Do not rely on owner statements like, "My dog doesn't bite."
4. When approaching the homeowner, take control of the situation and tell the owner what you want them to do. "I need you to control your dog." If they refuse, you can refuse service for your safety.
5. If the dog confronts you, face the dog, walk backward, say "No!", and leave the property. Do not stand sideways, and do not look away. You need to leave the area safely while keeping an eye on your threat. You should not be there long enough to challenge the dog. The dog knows you're going, and that's its intent when confronting you.
6. If the dog continues to approach, place a hat or anything else in front of the dog, making sure you move it to target the dog. You will know the dog's intent without you getting injured, allowing you to defend yourself without pain.
7. If the dog attempts to bite the object in front of it, you have the right to defend yourself. Once you are safe from potential harm, contact your supervisor, animal control, or police and document the incident.
8. Do not give dog treats. Dogs may be allergic to the treats you have. Rewarding a dog's behavior should come from the owner, not the worker.
9. If you encounter more than one dog, make sure you don't turn your back on the animals and focus on the one nearest you; place something in front of you or prepare to defend yourself if necessary. Leave the area as soon as it is safe to do so.

