

DOG ATTACKS

Dogs have instincts that may seem unpredictable when a stranger gets too close to their owner or perceived territory, and the nicest dogs may have the potential to become aggressive, sometimes without warning.

- Workers can carry simple defense equipment with them that can be used in the event of a dog attack.

Remember: Discouraging a dog from starting an assault is always better than fighting off an attack.

If a dog charges, use anything on hand as a distraction, such as a hat, a stick, an umbrella, a clipboard, a jacket, a bag, a tool, or a dog baton.

Specific tools that workers may carry, if authorized, include:

- **Dog Bite Stick/Baton** – By placing a stick or a baton between the worker and the dog, the animal is more likely to bite the object than the person.
- **Dog Barriers/Stopppers or Umbrellas** – These pop-action items can scare most dogs if used 6-8 feet away before they get too close. They also create a barrier between the worker and the dog providing an opportunity for them to back away from the property.
- **Dog Deterrent Spray or Pepper Spray** – While small and easy to carry, a spray may not be ideal on windy days and may not work on all dogs. *Before using, make sure it's legal to carry in your state.*
- **High Impact Whistle or Small Air Horn** – Creating a loud sound can startle a dog enough to cause them to stop the attack, and it may also attract the attention of others (or the owner) who can assist, but it may not work with all dogs.

If you unexpectedly encounter a dog:

- Never run away from a dog or turn your back on a dog.
- Keep your back against a wall, the side of the house or a fence to prevent the dog from circling behind you and attacking.



Image: 0002363 m4ni/Shutterstock.com

Discussion

Do you carry or recommend any specific dog bite prevention tools?

How do you handle the situation if you unexpectedly encounter a dog on a job site?