Dog Bite Prevention Tips

If you encounter a strange dog:

- Do not scream. This may excite the dog even more.
- Do not throw things at the dog. This may make him mad and more likely to try and bite you.
- Do not run. The dog may chase you.
- Do not turn your back on the dog.
- Remain motionless. Keep your hands and arms at your side with your hands tucked into fists.
- Avoid making eye contact with the dog.
- Once the dog loses interest, slowly back away until the dog is out of sight.
- If the dog attacks, "feed" it a jacket, purse, backpack or any other object to create a barrier between you and the dog. This may buy you enough time to escape.
- If the dog knocks you down, curl into a ball, protect your ears and the back of your neck with your arms and remain motionless.
- If you are bitten, immediately wash the wound with soap and water and contact your physician. Report the bite to your local animal control agency and the police.

More safety tips…

- Never approach a dog that is tied up in a yard.
- Never reach through a fence to pet a dog.
- Never try to pet a dog that is in a car.
- Never bother a dog that is eating, sleeping or caring for puppies.
- Never pull a dog's ears or tail.
- Never try to pet a dog that is sick, hurt or frightened (i.e. by fireworks, thunder, etc.)
- Be careful when playing with dogs. They may get overly excited and try to bite you.

When you pet a dog:

- Always let the dog see you first.
- Let the dog come to you on his own terms.
- Make a fist and hold your hand out towards the dog's nose so he can sniff your hand.
- Talk to the dog in a normal voice. Do not yell or scream.
- If the dog seems comfortable with you, gently pet the dog in the back (not on the head - that's too close to the mouth, which contains those sharp teeth!)

San Bernardino County
Animal Care & Control Program
(800) 472-5609