

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL STAFF AND CONTRACTORS**

**CONTRACTOR SERIOUS INJURY – DOG ATTACK**

A serious incident occurred on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2014 where a haulage contractor was seriously injured after being attacked by a dog.

The contractor had been tasked to deliver piling plant and equipment to a Worksite at Preston Brook Station. The driver was approaching the access point via a private road when he found the access route restricted by a private car.

The driver approached the property to ascertain who owned the vehicle and request that it be moved to allow access to the worksite. As he entered the garden area a large Alsatian dog attacked him with no warning. The attack left the driver with serious injuries to his hand and superficial injuries to his leg.

The driver was taken to hospital where he has so far undergone surgery twice on his injured hand and is awaiting further tests to confirm the full extent of the damage. The police have been informed and an investigation is ongoing.

Always use caution when approaching properties. Check for any warning signs or evidence of dogs at the property before opening any gates. Call out before entering and be cautious where the doors to a property are open.

**What to Do if You Are Attacked**

If you have enough time, the first line of defence is to let the dog attack something on you that isn't you — for example, if you're wearing a sweater, get your arm out of a sleeve and get that sleeve in the dog's face. If the dog takes the bait, let it pull the sweater off, then slowly back out of the area. To the dog, it has just gotten hold of a piece of you, and this may distract it long enough for you to get to safety.

In all cases, remember to protect your face, chest, and throat. Also keep your hands in fists to protect your fingers. If you must be bitten, the safest place for it to happen is the shin or forearm; a dog bite to the thigh can cause fatal bleeding.

If you are bitten, resist the natural urge to try to pull away. This will just make the injury worse through tearing your flesh. Oddly enough, if the attack escalates to this point, then you actually want the dog to latch on. Why? The dog only has one mouth, but you have two hands. If you can manage it at this point, grab its back legs and lift them off the ground.

Remember: Dogs are not naturally inclined to attack humans unless they feel a threat to themselves, their pack, or their territory. We cannot always avoid the problem because some dog owners are irresponsible or negligent. However, we can arm ourselves with the knowledge that will prevent a situation from escalating, and minimise the damage if it does move on to an attack.

All incidents of dog attacks and aggressive behaviours from dogs are to be reported using the incident reporting process and the Close Call Reporting process.