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## LOCAL NEWS

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### Woman seeks intervention after neighborhood dog bite

Gina Mangieri

A 66-year-old Aiea woman says she called police after being attacked by a neighborhood dog. But so far it seems nothing's been done. And now she's hoping the Hawaiian Humane Society will intervene to remove the dog from the neighborhood.

The victim spent 6 days in the hospital. Now that she's back home, she's concerned about the safety of her neighborhood.

Lydia Kam was out for her morning walk on June 16 when she says a neighbor's dog bit her on Kahilina Place in Aiea.

"I saw him come but he's so fast," she said. "I still in my mind think how fast that dog attack. He bit me first on my thigh, then he already knocked me down -- and then he bit my hand. All over bruised -- every place."

She recalls the attack lasting 4 to 5 minutes, and says she couldn't find the strength to fight back.

"I was thinking, oh I'm gonna die, I died, I'm gonna die," she said.

The dog's owner pulled the animal off Lydia. She spent the next 6 days in the hospital.

According to police the dog was a mastiff. That breed can weigh up to 165 pounds.

"I think that dog must be heavier than me. I'm 98 pounds," she said.

According to the Kam family and neighbors, police were called before when the same dog bit another neighbor. A police report was filed the day of Lydia's incident.

Currently, over half of households own pets, with dog owners outnumbering cat owners by a 2-to-1 ratio. Pet ownership has grown from 40% of households in 1993, a trend that is prevalent in the Waikele, Ewa, and Leeward communities on Oahu.

"The humane society should be contacted in serious cases so that a dog doesn't become a neighborhood," said Emily Gardner, Lydia's attorney, who specializes in animal-related cases.

But it's up to police to decide whether to involve the humane society when officers receive a bite.

"The officer in charge who responded to the incident used his discretion and did not contact the humane society right away," Gardner said.

The humane society says it's heard from the Kam family and is looking into the matter.

Lydia hopes the dog can be removed from the neighborhood.

"I go through a lot of pain, so please be careful -- don't let somebody happen again," Lydia said.

We left messages for the dog's owner and tried finding them at home. Lydia and her family hope the owners have been sympathetic, though a lawsuit is being prepared.

According to the humane society, dogs large and small can be aggressive. If your dog bites another person or another animal, it can result in fines up to \$2,000 and the owner could spend up to 90 days in jail.

"Breed is not an indicator of whether a dog is going to be likely to bite. What's a better indicator is the relationship between the dog and its owner," said Jacque Smith, humane society director. "Certainly get your dog sterilized, second ensure that your dog is socialized, and we'll help you get them used to a variety of people and environments."



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