

# Wellington Daily News

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## Dog attacks 82 year-old Wellington woman

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They are considered man's best friend, but in a period of two days this week, dogs in the Wellington area have been responsible for two dog bite incidents.

According to Wellington Police Chief Tracy Heath, the first occurred at 9:49 p.m., Monday, Oct. 15. A family-owned dog bit a 15 year-old girl who received medical attention for the bite at Sumner Regional Medical Center.

The second attack happened the next day at 10:17 a.m., Tuesday, Oct. 16 at the Wheat Capitol Carwash located near the corner of 16th and H.

Heath says a 82 year-old woman was getting out of her car to get water when a second person at the carwash was getting out of their car.

The dog in the second car ran out of the car and attacked the woman, causing her to fall to the ground and be bitten on the arm as she protected herself from the animal.

The woman was also taken to Sumner Regional Medical Center for her injuries. The driver of the second vehicle was cited for vicious dog and dog-at-large.

U.S. Postal Service letter carrier Barb Trott witnessed the attack at the carwash and stopped to render aid and was eventually forced to mace the dog.

Both dogs are being confined for 10 days for rabies observation and to decide what will happen to them.

Heath says it's not unusual to get calls on dog bites frequently.

"They are pretty common," said Heath. "It's not something we do on a weekly basis, but we do see it a lot."

The police chief says 11 dog bites have occurred so far this year with peaks in the warm summer months. Starting in March, the most number of bites occurred in March and again in June.

"People are outside in June and July, so you see it a little more often. It should be dying off here soon as it gets colder," said Heath.

Heath is calling the carwash bite a "freak incident" with the 82 year-old woman doing nothing wrong.

"I don't want say she was in the wrong place at the wrong time, but it was definitely a freak occurrence," said Heath.

Greg O'Neil, animal control officer for the City says most dog bites aren't bad, just breaking the skin.

"You wouldn't think it, but we see a lot of bites from the smaller dogs" the ankle

biters," said O'Neil.

O'Neil advises, "If you think the dog is aggressive try to keep something between you, like a door, a fence, or even a stick. Anything to keep them away from you."

He says most dogs won't bite, but will act to defend themselves.

"If dogs are gonna attack, they're gonna attack," he said.

He warns area residents to be wary of approaching any animal they don't know. That goes for dogs, cats and wild animals.

"I see a lot of kids picking up stray cats and getting bit, so it's not just dogs you have to worry about," said O'Neil.

When an animal is confined for the 10 day observation, it is then sometimes released back to the owner and if it's found to be vicious, it most likely is returned but the owner is told to keep it out of the City limits, said O'Neil.

"It's all up to the City attorney as to what happens after a bite," he said.

"Each case is different and I know (City attorney Kerwin Spencer) looks at each case,"

O'Neil encourages any resident with vicious animal concerns to contact the Wellington Police Department before a bite occurs.

"You never know if a dog will bite or not," said O'Neil.

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