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Man injured in Elgin dog attack

Owner of small pet bitten trying to protect it from larger animal

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By [STEVEN ROSS JOHNSON](#) Staff Writer

ELGIN -- A man suffered injuries not considered life-threatening Thursday morning when he was bitten by a dog as he was walking his own dog on the city's southeast side, police said.

Elgin Deputy Police Chief Jeffrey Swoboda said the incident occurred about 11 a.m. near the intersection of Raymond and Dwight streets.

He said a dog -- identified as a mastiff and bulldog mix breed, estimated to weigh about 80 pounds -- attacked the man's dog, a dachshund, causing it severe injuries. The man was injured when he tried to break up the fight, according to Swoboda.

"The owner tried to get in the middle of it to separate them, and he got minor injuries to his hand, face and leg," Swoboda said.

He said one of the responding officers was forced to shoot at the dog when it began to charge.

"When officers arrived, the mastiff/bulldog mix charged at one of our officers, and he fired his weapon," he said.

The man was treated for his injuries at the scene. The dachshund was taken to an area veterinarian for treatment, according to police animal control Officer James Rog. Its current condition was not known.

Upon capturing the mastiff, Rog said he did not find any proof that the dog had been shot but instead discovered puncture wounds that most likely were caused by the dachshund as it tried to defend itself.

Swoboda said officers were able to track the dog back to a residence in the 600 block of Grace Street, where its owner was identified as 18-year-old Crystal Flinchem.

Flinchem was cited with having a dog at large and no proof of rabies vaccination, both city ordinance violations that each carry a penalty ranging from \$50 to \$500, according to Rog.

A third citation, having a dangerous dog, does not have a fine, but is a determination authorities may make if the owner fails to carry out certain requirements.

"If the dog is deemed dangerous, there are certain restrictions and qualifications the dog

has to meet from this point on," he said.

The dog was left in the owner's custody, who Rog said was legally responsible for making sure the dog remained confined over the next 24 hours while testing for rabies was conducted.

"Under the ordinance, we had full authority to seize the animal and hold it," he said. "But due to the fact it bit somebody, I need to make sure that dog gets quarantined, and it's the owner's responsibility to quarantine the animal."

So far this year, there have been 88 reported animal bites throughout the city, which include attacks by dogs, cats and wild animals, according to Rog.

In January, a 53-year-old woman walking her dog sustained wounds to her forehead as she tried to fend off a pit bull attack in front of her west-side residence.

Rog said people who find themselves confronted with a potentially dangerous animal should try to contact help immediately and think twice about trying to defend their pet.

"The size of this dog that was the aggressor was a substantially large dog, so you have to look after your own personal safety." Rog said. "The best thing to do is yell for help or to call 911."

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