

I HAVE A DOG PROBLEM! WHAT SHOULD I DO?

1. Before approaching the city, talk to the owner and let him or her know that there is a problem with their dog whether it is barking, running-at-large or trespassing or leaving droppings in your yard.
2. Get support from your neighbors. Especially if you don't know who the dog belongs to, ask your neighbors--they may know the owner.
3. Collect as much information as possible: a description of the dog (color, sex, breed), its collar, the times it is running around, the nature of the problem, and who you think the owner is or maybe.
4. If you are unable to find the owner or if the owner doesn't resolve the problem, call city hall at 376-8411 and provide as much information as possible. The city will search its records and see if the dog is licensed and check with the city maintenance crew to see if they are familiar with the dog. Once the dog is identified the city will send a warning letter to the owner giving them 10 days to comply with the city code.
5. Any citizen may capture an animal that is trespassing on his or her property. You must then contact city hall, who will notify Pet Rescue that you will be taking the dog to the shelter. Pets are personal property and keeping them without the above steps constitutes theft.
5. Remember the city can only sign the complaint for a violation they witness. Any citizen may cite the owner of a dog that the citizen witnesses violating the law. Record the date and time when the violation occurred then go to city hall and sign the citation. A police officer will serve it.



6. Once the citation into municipal court is served, the defendant will have 7 to 10 days to enter a plea. If the defendant pleads guilty he or she will be fined without further action on your part.

7. However if the defendant pleads not guilty, a court date will be set and you and the defendant will both have to appear before the judge. If you do not show up for court, the case will be dismissed by the judge. You will be expected to provide your evidence and may bring neighbors or others who can support your case. The judge will weigh the evidence and make a decision. The defendant can be fined anywhere from nothing to \$250.

8. Biting dogs are a particularly emotional problem. All animal bites should be reported to city hall. The clerk can check to see if a current rabies vaccination is on file and notify the police. If the dog does not have a current vaccination, he needs to be held and monitored for rabies, even if you do not want to sign a citation. Defenses:

1. The dog bites or attempts to bite a person wrongfully provoking or assaulting the dog's keeper; or
2. The dog bites a person or attempts to bite a person trespassing upon premises occupied by the dog's keeper.



9. Other dog related nuisance offenses covered by city codes:

Chasing a vehicle or person; Damaging or destroying property; Scattering garbage; Trespassing on private property; Disturbing any person by frequent or prolonged noises; or keeping a female in heat, which is running at large (dogs must be on a lease when off your property) (383-91).

Number of Dogs Licensed
2004 - 59

2005 - 160

2006 - 162