10 Commandments of Dog Bite Safety

While the following list is not comprehensive, here are Bulli Ray's 10 commandments of dog bite safety.

1. Never run away from a dog. It's a fact that you can't outrun a dog, and you should never, ever turn your back on one. You can't keep a dominant dog from attacking, but you can dominate a submissive dog by taking an aggressive frontal posture. The submissive dog will try to circle behind you to attack.

2. Be more aggressive than the dog. You have to let the dog know that you will not back down. Stay forward, stay tall and stay big. Dogs read posture and react to deep voices. Almost every dog knows the meaning of the word "no." Use it loudly.

3. Use an object to steer yourself to a safe place. Put a stick, a garbage can lid, an umbrella or another item between you and the dog. If the dog bites, it will bite the object and not your body.

4. Keep your back against something. This keeps the dog from circling behind you and attacking, which is what most dogs prefer. If you back up against a house or a fence, you should then be able to move sideways toward an exit.

5. Find anything to put between you and the dog. Most utilities train their meter readers to feed the handheld device to the dog. Another good option is for an employee to remove their hard hat, grab the suspension inside and shove the shell toward the dog. Any barrier is a good barrier.

6. The most sensitive, vulnerable part of a dog is the paw. This doesn't sound like a commandment, but it is important information that most people don't know. Reaching for a dog's eyes, head or nose is dangerous because of their proximity to the dog's teeth, but grabbing a paw can get a dog to back off.

7. In a pack attack, pick one dog and hurt it. The other dogs will attack the injured dog and you can escape. This may sound strange, but it is true. In a pack attack, dogs are frenzied. In a frenzy, they attack any sign of weakness. When one dog yelps, the other dogs will go after it.

8. In an attack, face the dog from the side, not the front. A frontal posture is a dominant posture. This is what you show the dog to get them to back down. If the dog keeps coming, turn to the side to protect your vital organ area and to get a better stance for the impact. A side posture gives you a better chance of staying on your feet and makes your abdomen and neck areas less accessible to the dog.

9. Dogs are more likely to attack if the owner is present. Remember that dogs are part of a pack. The owner is usually the alpha member of the pack. Therefore, the dog will try to circle behind you and distract you by biting from the rear.

10. Make noise before you enter an area. One of the worst things you can do is startle a dog. Before entering any area through a door or gate, make noise – such as jingling your keys or yelling "power company" – to let the dog know you are there.