

WESTERN NY — The number of postal employees attacked by dogs nationwide reached 6,244 in 2017 — more than 500 fewer than 2016. **Seventy-nine of those attacks occurred in Western NY, down 4 percent, from 82 in the previous year.** Below are national and local statistics for dog attacks.

While the City of Buffalo saw great improvement in dog attacks, down 46 percent from 2016 (28 to 15); the City of Rochester had a 127 percent jump in dog attacks (11 to 25) and is listed in the national city rankings in the 16<sup>th</sup> position.

“Dog attack prevention is about vigilance,” said Western NY District Safety Manager Daniel Welch. “Our employees must be vigilant in identifying where dogs reside and taking necessary precautions; dog owners must be vigilant in keeping dogs restrained when carriers are at their home; and we need to teach our children on how to behave around family pets as well as dogs they do not know.”

### **Enhancing Employee Safety**

The Postal Service promoted two safety measures to alert USPS carriers of dogs on their delivery routes. Customers using *usps.com*'s Package Pickup are asked to indicate if there is a dog at their address when they schedule a package pickup.

In addition, the Mobile Delivery Devices letter carriers use to scan packages to confirm delivery includes a feature that allows carriers to indicate the presence of a dog at an individual address. This is especially helpful to substitutes who fill-in for letter carriers on their days off.

USPS gave the following tips and encouraged sharing them using the hashtag **#preventdogbites**. A video on dog bite prevention tips is available on the Postal Service's YouTube channel.

- If a carrier delivers mail or packages to your front door, place your dog in a separate room and close that door before opening the front door. Some dogs burst through screen doors or plate-glass windows to attack visitors. Dog owners should keep the family pet secured.
- Parents should remind their children and other family members not to take mail directly from carriers in the presence of the family pet, as the dog may view the person handing mail to a family member as a threatening gesture.
- The Postal Service places the safety of its employees as a top priority. If a carrier feels threatened by a dog, or if a dog is loose or unleashed, the owner may be asked to pick up mail at a Post Office until the carrier is assured the pet has been restrained. If a dog is roaming the neighborhood, the pet owner's neighbors also may be asked to pick up their mail at the area's Post Office.