

No. 079/2024

26 February 2024

Our Ref: P18/24

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Royal Mail Group (SHE) Safety Flash FY24 03 – ‘Dog Attack – Through Sliding Porch Door’ – BEWARE!

Introduction

Royal Mail Group’s Safety Team have issued ‘RMG SHE Safety Flash FY24 003’ which in effect aims to do two things:

- Draw attention and raise awareness amongst the Royal Mail delivery workforce of the increasing number of dogs attacks and to be vigilant, take no risks and adopt a ‘zero-tolerance approach to dog hazards.
- Warn the delivery workforce no to open the street doors to homes under any circumstances, including as in this case a ‘Sliding Porch Door’ which has a second access door to the home behind it. This action in effect removes a barrier between the Royal Mail delivery postal worker and any dogs that may be inside the premises.

Background

Over the last two years, dog attacks have risen by 15% a year and Loss Time Accident Dog Attacks have risen over 60%.

Over 80% of dog attacks on postal workers occur at the street door or on the garden path or drive. The most common incident type is when the postman or woman knocks on a customer’s door or rings the bell in order to make a delivery which needs a signature or won’t go through the letterbox and the resident or family member and in many cases children open the front door without firstly securing or restraining their dog, which subsequently charges out of the property and attacks the postman or woman, in many cases inflicting serious injuries or maulings.

In a recent case, a delivery postal worker approached a house to make a delivery and opened the outer porch sliding glass door to knock on the inner front door. A child opened the inner door allowing the dog to barge past the child, exit the property and launch an attack on the postal worker which included bites to the face resulting in significant wounding requiring emergency and ongoing hospital and GP treatment.

Key Messages

Delivery postmen and women to be warned and reminded that when ringing the bell/knocking on a customer’s door:

- As the customer approaches the door announce who you are and ask them to put their dog away before they open the door.
- Step back from the door to a safe distance to create a space between you and the door. Utilise outer doors, gates, to put a physical barrier between you and any unknown hazardous dogs.
- Do not pass items into the customer's/dog's space as this is often perceived as a threat by the dog.
- Report all significant dog hazards to a manager so they can be recorded on the ORA (Offsite Risk Assessment) or duty log, for example: dogs showing aggression, challenging behaviour at the doorstep, customers who open the door without properly restraining the dog, a dog snatching letters behind a letterbox or running loose on a property or in a public space.
- Do not make local agreements with customers where dogs are involved on the premises/in gardens etc.
- Take no risks, err on the side of caution, do not accept a dog owner's/customer's word that their dog is safe, do not enter a premises where a dog is running loose and not under control or if there are signs that a dog could be present but out of sight.

Actions:

- PiCs/Managers – Brief staff on this SHE Flash, display it and bring it to the attention of all delivery staff.

CWU ASR/WSR Action:

- ASRs/WSRs please ensure that this Safety Flash is communicated, displayed and brought to the attention of the delivery workforce.
- ASRs/WSRs to carry out spot check safety inspections including a check that the SHE Flash has been deployed and briefed to staff by PiCs/Managers.
- ASRs to check awareness by delivery workers during Workplace Safety Inspections and ensure staff are briefed, raising awareness at every opportunity with delivery member workers.

Attachment:

- Royal Mail Group (SHE) Safety Flash FY24 003 – '**Dog Attack – Through Sliding Porch Door**'

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer



Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) FLASH



Flash Date:	22/02/2024	Ref:	SHE Flash FY24 003 -Sliding Door Dog Attack	Alert Author:	Donna Hallett
Audience:	Delivery and Collection employees				

Overview	Avoiding animal attacks
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Key Message

We have seen an increase in dog attacks this year, the most common incident type is when we knock on a customer's door and they open it but fail to restrain their dog, which subsequently attacks our employee.



A recent incident saw one of our colleagues open a outer sliding glass porch door, to knock on the inner door, a child opened the inner door allowing the dog to exit the property. Subsequently biting our colleague on the face resulting in a significant wound.

STEPS TO KEEP SAFE

Remember, when you knock on a customer's door:

- As the customer approaches the door announce who you are and ask them to put their dog away before they open the door.
- Step back from the door to a safe distance to create a space between you and the door. Utilise outer doors, gates, to put a physical barrier between you and any unknown hazardous dogs.
- Do not pass item into the customer/dogs' space.
- Report all significant dog hazards (dogs showing aggression, challenging behaviour at the doorstep e.g., when a customer opens the door with dog unrestrained, snatching letters behind letterbox or loose on a property or in a public space) to a Manager so they can be recorded on ORA (Offsite Risk Assessment) or duty log, do not make local agreements.