



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

*For Immediate Release*

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# **Charges pending in pit bull attack**

## **Owner agrees to dog's destruction**

AURORA, ON Nov. 12, 2010—Charges are pending in the case of a dog attacking a 12-year-old boy in Aurora Nov. 9. The owner of the dog has agreed to have it destroyed.

Bylaw officers have interviewed the victim who was walking home from school when the attack happened. According to the victim and a witness, the dog in question—a pit bull—jumped a fence and bit the boy on the back of each leg once.

He was taken to hospital and treated for minor physical injuries and released. No stitches were required.

The Ontario's 2005 Dog Owners' Liability Act (DOLA), passed in 2005, bans the breeding, sale and ownership of pit bulls. Dogs born before the law was passed were grandfathered in but need to be leashed and muzzled when outside. They also need to be neutered or spayed.

The dog in question in the Aurora attack is nine years old.

The Town's Manager of Bylaw Services, Jon Popple, said the dog is not licensed with the Town.

Charges under the Town's Animal Control Bylaw could include allowing the dog to bite a person, allowing the dog to run at large and having an unlicensed dog. The maximum fine for each charge is \$5,000.

"As we unfortunately had to demonstrate earlier this year in the case of another dog attack, the Town will do everything in its power to make sure our residents are safe when they walk the streets," said Neil Garbe, Chief Administrative Officer. "We need to continue sending the message to pet owners that they are responsible for ensuring their animals are not a danger to people or other animals. This means making sure they are leashed and under control when in public and that their shots are up to date."

The dog is now under quarantine at the Ontario Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) shelter in Newmarket. The OSPCA is contracted by the Town to provide animal control and shelter services.

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While the shelter remains closed as the OSPCA continues to deal with the aftermath of an outbreak of ringworm earlier this year, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs has allowed dangerous or aggressive dogs to be housed in the shelter proper as opposed to the temporary portable shelters on the property.

Pople said that's because the shelter has special cages that allow staff to feed and clean up after the animals without having to come in direct contact with them.

No date has been set yet to have the dog put down.

This is the second serious dog attack to happen in Aurora this year.

Back in March, a woman was seriously injured and her dog killed by a dog. The Town was successful in obtaining a court order to have that animal destroyed.

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