

## **NEW LAW FOR DOG OWNERS**

In November 2006, the City of Oakley joined all other cities in the County by adopting Contra Costa Animal Services "dangerous dog" law.

The new law requires that owners of dogs that have been determined as "dangerous" or "potentially dangerous" apply to the County Animal Services for a special permit to own the animal. A dog may be designated potentially dangerous if it has twice in three years "engaged in any unprovoked behavior that required defensive action to prevent bodily injury, or has bitten a person causing minor injuries, or has attacked another domestic animal." A dangerous dog is one that has bitten a person or caused serious injury or death or attacked livestock.

Once a dog is designated, the owner will only be allowed to keep it if they have a special permit from the County. The permit required the animal to be confined when at home, and leashed and muzzled when in public. Owners must post a sign warning there is a dangerous or potentially dangerous animal on their property. The dog must be neutered or spayed and have an identity microchip implant. Additionally, a "potentially dangerous" dog and its owner must complete a dog obedience course that has been approved by an Animal Services Officer. If the dog is designated "dangerous," Animal Services may require the animal to be put down.

Another feature of the law is that it prohibits convicted felons from owning dangerous or potentially dangerous animals. The law does not ban any breed of animal, but identifies behavior situations of any animal that would be subject to law.

For more information or animal control issues or complaints, contact Contra Costa Animal Services at (925) 335-8300.