



Esteban Rodriguez
Director

Donna Gillesby
Deputy Director

PUBLIC SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT: Rattlesnake Awareness

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A recent tragedy in Ventura County highlights the very real danger of rattlesnakes in our community. A 46-year-old woman died after being bitten while hiking in Thousand Oaks, and according to the Ventura County Fire Department, there have been **four rattlesnake bite incidents since March 14th**, with **nine total reported in 2025**.

A Ventura County Fire spokesperson emphasized that in snakebite situations, **“your goal is to get to a hospital as soon as possible.”**

How to protect yourself:

- Stay on designated trails avoiding tall grass, brush, and rocky areas
- Watch where you step and place your hands
- Never approach or try to handle a snake
- Be especially cautious during warm weather when snakes are more active

How to protect your pets:

- Always keep pets on a leash while hiking or walking outdoors
- Do not allow pets to explore off-trail or into brush
- Bring pets indoors, especially in areas where rattlesnakes are common
- Stay alert! Dogs are often bitten on the face or legs when investigating snakes

If you encounter a rattlesnake:

- Stay calm and **keep a safe distance**
- Slowly back away and do not make sudden movements
- Do not attempt to move or kill the snake
- Give the snake space to escape as they usually try to avoid humans

Rattlesnakes are a natural part of our environment. Awareness and simple precautions can prevent serious injury or death.

Questions? Please contact Ventura County Animal Services: (805) 388-4341 | info@vcas.us