



# Dogs deter burglars

By **Kimberly Lennard**

OWNING a dog has many benefits but according to the latest research from the Petcare Information and Advisory Service the watchful eyes of our four-legged friends are also a key deterrent to burglars.

Service spokeswoman Susie Willis says with statistics showing that someone in Australia is burgled just about every minute, the vast majority (88 per cent) of dog owners say that having a dog around the house deters burglars.

“They report that this is primarily about the dog’s ability to monitor and alert neighbours if an intruder enters the property.”

Ms Willis says research from the University of Western Australia shows that dog ownership does contribute to a broader feeling of safety within the community.

“The perception of safety is one of the key measures of community well-being and it is clear from the university research that the presence of dogs in a community contributes to feelings of safety,” Ms Willis says.

Dr Lisa Wood from the School of Population Health at the University of Western Australia found that people out walking dogs increased social interaction within the community and made the community as a whole feel safer. Ms Willis says this isn’t



**Dog watch:** Statistics have shown that dog owners feel safer in their homes.

about guard dogs and fences; it is about people recognising a neighbour who they see out walking their dog or people stopping to chat to a dog owner.

“It is also about the feeling of personal safety that dog owners have, with the research showing that 83 per cent of dog owners say they feel safer in their homes because they own a dog,” Ms

Willis said. “Dogs may well be an effective deterrent to burglars, but they also bring a range of benefits to their owners and the broader community.”

**The Petcare Information & Advisory Service provides non-commercial information on socially-responsible pet ownership. Visit [petnet.com.au](http://petnet.com.au)**