

You have lost your pet, and you're understandably upset. Please spend a few minutes now reading the following suggestions on searching for your pet.

### **YOU WILL NEED**

- Pictures of your pet.
- Dog license or cat registration tag number, if on your pet when lost
- Your pet's tattoo number, if any
- Description of what your pet was wearing, collars, harness choke collar, flea collar, sweater, etc.
- Description of your pet's physical characteristics: breed, size, color, markings, identifying marks such as scars, odd-colored eyes, tail, ears; physical abnormalities such as one eye, three legs, etc.

Check all neighboring animal shelters as soon as possible. Your pet can run fast and far. Pets are often found by people on their way to or from work and taken to the shelter nearest their home. If you are unable to search for your pet yourself, ask a responsible person, someone who knows the animal, to look for you. It is best to give them a note with your permission to handle all matters concerning your pet.

### **AT THE ANIMAL SHELTER**

Do not expect identification by phone; verbal descriptions are not reliable with so many animals to check. Owners of tagged animals are notified immediately, but tags can come off or be removed before the animal reaches the shelter, so don't rely upon being notified.

- Visit each shelter in your area at least once every three days. Many shelters hold stray animals only three days as required by law.
- Check every area in the shelter where animals are kept.
- Ask to see all off-limits animal areas, such as quarantine, isolation and hospital wards.
- Find out if sick or injured animals are taken somewhere else, and where they are taken.
- File a lost pet report, including a picture if possible, at every shelter.
- Post lost pet notices on bulletin boards in libraries, Laundromats, churches, stores, etc.
- Check the Found and DOA (dead on arrival) files at the shelter.
- Keep visiting the shelter, as stray animals often arrive weeks or months after they disappear.

If you have moved recently, check shelters in your old neighborhood as pets frequently return to their former residence.

### **IF YOUR PET IS NOT AT THE ANIMAL SHELTER**

- Advertise in all local newspapers. Offer a reward, but do not specify the amount.
- Do not give out the name or your pet in ads or over the phone.
- Contact other animal agencies, such as veterinary hospitals and pet adoption agencies.
- Post lost pet notices on bulletin boards in libraries, Laundromats, churches, stores, etc.
- Inform breed clubs of your missing pet, if it is a purebred.
- Canvas your neighborhood on foot, day and night. Leave notices with your name, address, phone number(s), and pet's description and photograph at every house. Talk to everyone you meet.
- Ask your postman, meter reader and paper carrier if they have seen your pet. Notify police in your area.
- Search at night on foot, after dinner when it is quiet. Call and whistle for your pet. If it is frightened or injured, it may be hiding. Drive slowly through the neighborhood when traffic is light; your pet may recognize the sound of your car's engine.
- Check all potential hiding places. Pets have been trapped in drawers, cabinets, closets, garages, and basements. Look under car hoods, in shrubs, and under parked cars.
- Contact local radio stations. Many broadcast free lost pet announcements.
- Check recently vacated places, and inquire if any neighbor has recently gone on vacation. Animals have been inadvertently locked in neighbors' houses, garages, sheds, etc.
- Ask if announcements can be made in local schools. Children often know what has become of a lost pet.