

# PET THEFT AWARENESS

Statistics tell us up to 2 million pets are stolen each year and that 1 in 3 pets will go missing at some point in their lives.

Less than 20% of dogs and 2% of cats are ever returned home.

*Where do these animals end up?*

Dogs can end up in unimaginable places, from research laboratories to puppy mills, from dog fighting rings as bait dogs.

*What can you do to ensure the safety of your beloved pets?*

## DO:

- DO educate family, friends and neighbors about pet theft, especially each year on Feb. 14th, Valentine's Day and Pet Theft Awareness Day.
- DO keep your dog indoors, especially when you're not home. Outdoor dogs should be kept safely behind a locked gate.
- DO walk your dog on a leash.
- DO keep cats strictly indoors. Indoor cats live safer, longer, healthier lives.
- DO provide your pets with collars, I.D. tags, and licenses.
- DO microchip your pet. It only takes a second for a thief to remove your pet's collar. A microchip will help ensure your and your pet are reunited if lost/stolen.
- DO register your pet for free to the only national database using facial recognition to help reunite pets and families: <https://petcolove.org/lost/>
- DO report suspicious neighborhood activities and/or missing companion animals to the police and animal control.
- DO keep recent photos of companion animals.
- DO Spay and Neuter your companion animals. "Fixed" animals are less likely to stray and less desirable to thieves who may want to breed pets for profit. Speak to your veterinarian about tattooing.



## DON'T:

- DON'T leave companion animals unattended in your yard. It only takes a few seconds for thieves to take them.
- DON'T tie your dog up outside of restaurants, coffee shops or stores, and never leave any animal unattended in a car.
- DON'T allow your dog to be visible from the street.
- DON'T use "free to good home" ads to place your companion animal. If you can no longer care for your pet, contact the local humane society or animal rescue for help.

# IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A SITUATION WHERE YOU THINK YOUR PET WAS STOLEN:



- Immediately file a report with your local police department and animal control.
- Contact your pet's microchip company, as well as local animal shelters and hospitals to see if your pet has turned up.
- Report your pet missing at: <https://petcolove.org/lost/>
- Post fliers around your neighborhood, especially in public spaces and businesses, with your pet's photo, name, breed, color, weight and any distinguishing characteristics.
- If you offer a reward, ask for a very detailed description of your pet and how they came into that person's possession. If you suspect that you are being scammed, call the police.
- Monitor newspaper ads and online postings to look for any that might fit your pet's description.

## PREVENT PET THEFT BEFORE IT HAPPENS!

- Report any suspicious activity, or animal cruelty and neglect to your local police department and animal control office.

