

C.H.I.P.S.
Citizens Helping to Improve Pet Safety

Benefits of Microchipping

Lost / Stray Pets are quickly identified and reunited with their Owners.

Stolen pets are quickly reunited with their Owners and the thieves are identified and brought to justice.

Space is more quickly freed up at county shelters, humane societies, and at rescue locations because pets are more quickly identified and reunited with their Owners; thus, decreasing costs associated with housing these pets.

Microchipping provides a means of identifying those who do not practice responsible pet ownership. It also provides a means to hold those accountable who abandon, dump (HUNTERS), or allow their pet to roam free to become lost or stolen. Should a Vet determine that the degree of neglect did not happen within the time frame of the pet's reported absence (if reported at all), the Pet Owner will be charged with Animal Neglect or Animal Cruelty.

Responsible pet ownership comes with a price. Microchipping costs deter those who should not consider adoption due to financial restraints.

Mandatory Microchipping should also deter those with hoarding issues to re-think additional pets. And, hopefully, reduce the number of Back Yard Breeders & Puppy Mill Operators. Thus, greatly impacting the pet population.

Draft of Proposed Legislation

All dogs, cats, kittens (7 weeks of age), and puppies (7 weeks of age) must be microchipped by _____.

Feral cats and kittens must be microchipped by the Veterinarian performing the spay / neuter on behalf of a Clinic, Humane Society, Rescue Organization, Animal Welfare Organization, or Good Samaritan. The chip will be registered to that organization or individual and the cat or kitten will be recognized as a feral cat or kitten with the microchip company.

All dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens must be microchipped before being adopted from a Shelter, Humane Society, Foster, Rescue Group, Animal Welfare Organization, Back Yard Breeder, Puppy Mill, Jockey Lot Vender, Flea Market Vender, or Citizen.

Upon adoption, the current Pet Owner or Organization must verify the new Owner's name and address via drivers license, ID card, or utility bill and call that information into the microchip company as a transfer of ownership. Thereafter, the current Owner (Adopter) would be provided with the name and phone number of the microchip company for responsible pet ownership to begin on their behalf by keeping all records current with the microchip company.

If a puppy or kitten is adopted out prior to becoming of age at 7 weeks old to be microchipped, the responsibility of microchipping becomes that of the new Owner.

All information on file for microchips (i.e. pet is lost, pet was located, pet was stolen, pet is deceased, I have moved, I have re-homed my pet to, etc...) must remain current and accurate with the microchip company by the Pet Owner.

Failure to Comply

Any pet, 7 weeks or older, belonging to a Pet Owner that is determined not to have a chip will be fined \$25 - 1st offense (per pet), \$50 - 2nd offense (per pet), \$75 - 3rd offense, \$100 - 4th offense (per pet), etc...

The Pet Owner has 10 days to comply by having their pet microchipped or risk having the pet removed.

Chips provide proof of ownership. Should the Pet Owner deny ownership and records indicate ownership, the fine will be implemented and the pet removed from their care. **Thereafter, the previous Owner has right of ownership, if they choose to claim the pet.**

Strays reunited with their Owners must be microchipped prior to leaving the shelter and the Owner incurs the cost.

Jockey Lot / Flea Market Owners, who knowingly rent space to those who are cited with failure to chip, will be cited for obstruction of justice and will be fined _____.

Tax Liens will be implemented on those with unpaid fines totaling \$ _____, or above, after a _____ day period of nonpayment. (Much like hospitals do with unpaid balances, withholding refunds was also discussed.)

Any large scale seizure of dogs found un-chipped will result in seizure of property & tax liens. This includes dog fighting.

Budget for Operating the Program

Fees collected for non-compliance will be used by County & City Shelters to / **County &**

City Administrators to:

Create a new Animal Welfare Program (CHIPS), which will employ new, certified Animal Welfare Law Enforcement Officers (Not Animal Control Officers, who only have the authority to issue citations for City / County Ordinance Violation. We need Law Enforcement officers who can to enforce State Animal Cruelty laws.)

Fines collected will be used to pay and equip these Law Enforcement Officers to carry out their duties. Their duties will include scanning pets in both City and County jurisdictions to ensure compliance. Also, their duties will include citing / arresting irresponsible Pet Owners with neglect or abuse, if found.

Court ordered fines collected from such abuse or neglect cases will be used to create programs to move any kill facility to a non-kill facility by means of implementing:

Free Spay / Neuter Programs beginning in Low-Income & Rural Areas

\$10 – Off Site Microchipping

Public Service Announcements (billboards, radio, print, etc...) to educate people about the CHIPS Program

Proving the Merit of This Program to City & County Officials

Show the daily cost of care spent on an un-chipped, stray pet at GCACS and multiply that figure by the number of days held. Then, take that figure and multiply it by the average number of pets housed on any given day.

This figure alone would justify the need to implement mandatory chipping. And, this is just one shelter in the Upstate. Think about the number of pets listed on craigslist under Lost & Found, lost pets on Facebook, and pets taken in by Rescue Groups. Chipping pets greatly reduces the financial resources to care for a stray, not to mention the man hours to search for the Owner.

According to the below Cesar Milan blog, “Many communities are proposing making microchipping all dogs mandatory. Just last month, Northern Ireland began requiring all of its dogs to be microchipped. Read More:”

http://www.cesarsway.com/news-and-events/cesars-blog/Should-You-Microchip-Your-Dog?utm_content=UK+celebrates+National+Microchipping+Month&utm_campaign=CW.com+Article&utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=Facebook%3A+Cesar+Millan

Other Thoughts

CHIPS Officers would handle Strays

Shelters would handle Owner Surrenders