

## Lost a Dog



My dog got out - what do I do?! It is an unfortunate fact that thousands of dogs go missing each and every year. The good news is that through the use of microchipping and an increased reliance on the web, many of these dogs are returned to their owners within days, even hours of their departure. If your dog is missing, the most important thing you can do is to never lose hope, be persistent in posting fliers, calling local agencies and visiting the shelter. As a dog owner that has been in this situation myself, my heart goes out to anyone that has lost their pet; never give up. Below you will find a few key points to remember when trying to locate a lost companion:

- The first thing to remember during this type of situation is to **STAY CALM**. Getting crazy or thinking irrationally will not help to bring your dog back any sooner.
- How long has it been since you last saw your dog - if you just saw them a minute ago and they jumped the fence, get in your car and start driving. Odds are that your neighbors have seen them and can help point you in the right direction. If it has been some time or you are unsure how long it has been, start going out on foot, making calls and scouring the web. Check your local Craigslist pets section as well as your local animal control/shelter's website.
- Go to your local animal control/shelter in person and check to see if your dog is there. Often a description over the phone is not enough to identify your dog, this way you can be sure whether or not they are there. If they are not there when you visit make sure to leave them all of your info as well as a picture of your dog.
- Take out a "lost dog" ad in your local newspaper as well as posting on your local community forums, such as Craigslist. Make sure to leave detailed information including a description of your pet, a photo, where they were last seen, your address and a number you can be contacted at anytime; you may also choose to offer a reward, if possible.
- Make fliers with your dog's information and post them in public places in your area - supermarkets, veterinary offices, doctors offices, stores, restaurant any place people will let you!
- Keep going back to the shelter, daily if possible and check out other nearby shelters if you live in a large metropolitan areas. Dogs can wander far from their homes before being picked up or turned in.
- Do not lose hope! Many dogs simply find their way home after days, even weeks, while others can show up in shelters or are found by good Samaritans days, weeks and months after their initial disappearance.

\*\* A word about microchips - make sure your dog's information is up to date! Contact the company through which your dog's micro chip was purchased and let them know of any address or telephone number changes as soon as they occur. If you are unsure which company provided your pet's chip, contact the veterinary office or shelter which did the implantation procedure for their contact information.