



# *Tompkins County SPCA*

Pet Care Series

## **What To Do If Your Pet Is Lost**

- Act quickly—as soon as you realize your pet is lost, canvass the area, calling your pet's name, and shaking a box of her favorite food or treats.
- It may help to leave your pet's bed, a piece of your clothing, or your cat's litterbox outside to help him find his way home. Leave food and water on the front or back porch until your animal is found.
- Talk to neighbors in person to find out if they've seen your pet. Cats can get trapped in garages or basements, and they like to hide in yards so ask neighbors to check or better yet, ask for permission to look yourself.
- Animals often recognize the sound of your car, so drive slowly around the neighborhood. Also stop to talk with people you see. Just before and right after dark are especially good times to look for both dogs and cats. Shake a box of treats or open a can of food while you search—most pets recognize these sounds.
- Make a "Lost Pet" sign, and post it in visible places near where the animal was lost. Getting the flyers up quickly is more important than making them pretty—handwritten signs are fine. Hand them out to people, and gradually widen the area where you post the flyers.
- Call the Tompkins County SPCA right away (607) 257-1822 to file a "Lost Pet Report." Check the shelter in person every day for your pet. Our hours are noon to 5:30 pm.
- Bring your "Lost Pet" flyer to local veterinarians and ask them to keep an eye out for your pet.
- Place a "Lost Pet" ad in the paper, and check the "Found Pet" ads daily.
- Don't give up—with diligence, there is an excellent chance you will find your pet.

### **An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure:**

When you first adopt your pet or move to a new place, she will not be used to the new location. Keep cats indoors for at least two weeks, and then if you choose to let your cat outside, accompany her at first. Walk your dog around the neighborhood—on leash—and do so frequently. This will help him get to know the area.

Keep an i.d. tag on your pet at all times, even if he has a microchip. Train your pet to come when you call her name or when you shake a can or box of treats—cats can learn this too! If your dog spends time outside, be sure your fence is secure. And have all your pets spayed or neutered since altered animals tend to wander a lot less.