



## Fact Sheet - Microchipping

Microchipping is another method of identifying pets other than collars and tags which can be lost or removed. A microchip is permanent and providing it meets the required standards and has been inserted correctly it will function for the life of your pet.



Microchipping was introduced for two main reasons. It enables a pet to be linked to its owner, so if it is stolen or lost, the pet owner can be reunited. It can also identify a dog which has been aggressive and classified as dangerous or menacing.

When any pet is found injured or lost and taken to vet or a welfare agency such as the SPCA, it is scanned, and if microchipped it can speedily be restored to its owner.

### What are Microchips?

A microchip is a small device about the size of a grain of rice. The microchip is implanted under the skin of the neck. The microchip has a unique number that can be scanned by a reader, similar to a barcode reader. This number is recorded in our database. You will need to register it at your local Council on the National Dog Database (NDD) and it can be registered on the New Zealand Companion Animal Register (NZCAR).



### Procedure

Placing a microchip is a common procedure and is safe for your animal. It is also quick if done by an experienced implanter. The site is often clipped and prepped to enable close monitoring of the implantation site and often local anaesthetic is used. We strongly recommend that your animal is microchipped by a Vet to ensure the microchip is located and implanted properly and to minimise the risk of infections or microchip migration.

### Legal Requirements

Since 1 July 2006, all dogs registered in New Zealand for the first time (except farm dogs used for stock control) must be microchipped and registered with your local council. This applies mainly to puppies when they are first registered at three months old.

The following dogs **MUST** be microchipped:

- Dogs registered for the first time in NZ after 3 months old
- Dogs that have been classed as menacing or dangerous on or after 1 Dec 2003
- Dogs that are unregistered and have been impounded
- Dogs currently registered but have been impounded for a second time.

### What do I do if I have lost my pet?

There are a number of steps you can take when you have lost your pet please check these out at [www.animalregister.co.nz](http://www.animalregister.co.nz) and click on the icon for lost and found advice. If your animal is found and taken to a Vet, SPCA or pound it will be scanned and contact details will be located.

### Council Database

Unless the information is recorded on the council database, the owner is not complying with the law and a dog picked up straying may be re-homed or euthanized rather than returned to its owner. The only safe way to ensure that your pet can be returned to you if it is lost or stolen is to have it microchipped and recorded on the council's database which means it will be on the National Dog Database.

It's up to you to notify the council if information has changed, for example if the dog has died or has been transferred to a new owner.

Dog registration and microchipping are two separate processes. You must register your dog every year, but you need to microchip your dog only once.



## Fact Sheet - Microchipping continued

### New Zealand Companion Animal Register (NZCAR)

As microchipping has become more common place the NZCAR is designed specifically to make the recovery of lost pets easier (compared to the NDD who is primarily interested in dog control) by ensuring that anyone can quickly check to see that their microchip number is on the database. This service is available for a small fee and is an additional measure you can use to track your pet should they go missing.

Personal details can be updated by the owner at any time for no additional cost.



**Microchipping your Cat**  
Cats are more commonly lost and harder to find than their canine counterparts. They are also more likely to be hit on the road and presented to SPCA, Council and of course the nearest veterinary clinic for treatment.

In the event of an accident, if an owner can be contacted immediately then treatment for the patient can be quickly started without any undue delay.

Cats that have been FIV (Feline AIDs) vaccinated should also be microchipped. This is because, in the event they are picked up as strays and FIV tested, they will test as positive. The FIV test is unable to distinguish between an infected animal or an animal that has been vaccinated. To prevent your vaccinated cat from being euthanased as an FIV infected stray – the presence

of a microchip will prevent this from happening as the owners and the cat's vaccination history will easily be looked up once the microchip has been scanned, via the NZCAR database.

The cost of microchipping is small compared with the stress and heartache of being unable to find your lost cat or dog.

