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Pet Sitters Promote Safety on Pet Theft Awareness Day

Pet parents urged to prepare on February 14

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. February 10, 2011 – Valentine’s Day – a time set aside to recognize special human or furry companions – is marked by joy and celebration, but for the parents of lost or stolen pets, the day is filled with sadness over the absence of a furry friend. On February 14th, the National Association of Pet Sitters (NAPPS) is commemorating Pet Theft Awareness Day by educating pet parents on safety measures to help protect from pet theft, as well as steps to take if a pet is missing.

“Pet theft is a nationwide crisis, and a pet parent’s worst nightmare,” explained John D’Ariano, President of the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters. “While the circumstances are tragic and heartbreaking, NAPPS remains hopeful that thefts can be minimized with increased awareness and safety measures.”

One of the most effective measures a pet parent can take in increasing the chances of a happy reunion is to have their pet microchipped. A microchip is a tiny transponder that uses radio frequency waves to transmit information about the pet. Should a lost or stolen pet arrive at a shelter, the presence of a microchip will ensure that the pet’s family is contacted immediately.

NAPPS has prepared the following prevention tactics and steps to follow in the event of a lost or stolen pet:

- Never leave your pet unattended in a yard, public area or car.
- When placing your pet in the care of a friend or family member, always make sure they are aware of safety precautions for your pet.
- In addition to an implanted microchip, ensure your pet always wears proper identification.
- Always maintain an accurate identification file for your pet, including a detailed description and several photos.
- If you believe your pet is stolen, call or visit your local animal shelter and government agency immediately, and continue contacting these organizations daily.
- Search everywhere. Explore any potential hiding spots, and check with all family members.
- File a police report with your local law enforcement agency. If there have been a string of pet thefts in your region, this information will assist in fully investigating the crimes.

- Canvas the neighborhood. Distribute flyers with your pet's photo, talk with neighbors, and ask delivery individuals if they have seen your pet or spotted any unusual activity. Call your pet's name over and over.
- Create and post signs with a clear photo of your pet and detailed descriptions.
- Register your pet with [Amber Alert for Pets](#), a nationwide network of pet parents committed to seeing lost pets safely returned home.
- Consider securing a pet insurance policy that includes coverage for cases of theft, such as [VPI Insurance](#).

About NAPPS: NAPPS is a national non-profit trade association dedicated to promoting the welfare of animals. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, serving as “the most respected authority in professional pet sitting.” It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS’ free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, nationwide referral service, and quarterly teleconferences aimed to educate the pet owning public. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS’ nationwide “Pet Sitter Locator” at www.petsitters.org. For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](#) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at facebook.com/TheNAPPS.

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