

# McHenry County Animal Control & Adoption Center: Registering & Microchipping Your Pet

McHenry County Animal Control microchips pets on the **1st Tuesday of every month from 10-11 am**. Call for an appointment: 815-459-6222

Microchips are safe, simple and permanent forms of pet identification designed to quickly identify lost pets and reunite them with their owners. It is estimated that over 10 million pets become lost each year, while only 1 in 10 lost pets is found. 1 out of every 3 pets is lost during its lifetime. Having a pet microchipped is a proven way to successfully recover a pet if it should become lost.

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## FAQ- Microchips:

### Is it safe?

No bigger than a grain of rice, a microchip is small, sterile, and safe. It requires no battery and anesthesia is not necessary.

### How does it work?

A microchip is a transponder that contains a unique ID code capable of being read by hand-held scanners used by animal shelters. Microchipping takes a few seconds, is relatively painless, and is recommended for all dogs, cats and rabbits over 8 weeks of age.

A staff member takes the pet to an exam room where a technician inserts a microchip under the pet's skin between the shoulder blades. The insertion of the microchip is similar to a vaccination and, for most animals, is not painful. The information is then stored in Animal Control's database and by the microchip company.

When a lost animal is brought to our shelter, a technician scans the entire body of the animal and, if the animal is microchipped, a number will register on the scanner. A staff member will

check our database or call the microchip company to obtain owner information and then contact the owner.

### **If my pet has a microchip, do I need a dog or cat license?**

Dogs and cats 4 months of age and older are required to be vaccinated against rabies and licensed. A dog or cat's license tag, which must be securely fastened to the pet's collar or harness and worn by the animal at all times, provides a uniform system of external identification, as well as a visible means of ensuring that the animal has been vaccinated against rabies.

If a dog or cat has been implanted with a microchip, we can also note the microchip number in the pet's license records, and contact the owner promptly if the animal is ever brought to us - with or without external identification.

### **Why would an owner want to microchip their pet?**

A dog or cat should always wear their license tag. However, collars or I.D. tags can become detached leaving the pet without any visible identification. A microchip is a permanent device that enables us to locate a pet's owner should they become lost, even if I.D. tags are removed or become illegible.

### **Why would an owner want to microchip their pet that never gets out of the house or yard?**

Many animals that live exclusively in the house or yard can still become lost. A family member or visitor can accidentally allow a pet to escape through an open door or gate. In other cases, pets may seek safety from the noise associated with fireworks or thunderstorms and in doing so escape the house or yard. Owners should be prepared and ensure their pets can be identified.

### **How long does the microchip last?**

Microchips will remain active for the life of the animal.

## Can an owner's address information be updated if they move?

Yes. This is extremely important. The owner can and should contact Animal Control and the microchip company to ensure that both databases contain current information in the event of a move.

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## Registration:

Registration and vaccination is required by County ordinance for dogs and cats over 4 months of age. Contact your local veterinary clinic for an appointment. Fees are set by the McHenry County Board. Special discounts are available for adults aged 62+, breeders, and pet owners who microchip and spay/neuter their pets

## Purchasing Tags:

Pet tags can be purchased at your local veterinary clinic or at our offices in Crystal Lake (100 N. Virginia Street) or Woodstock (2200 N. Seminary Avenue, Building A). A valid driver's license or photo ID with a current address and phone is required. Rabies vaccinations are required by ordinance for all dogs and cats over 4 months of age. A signed rabies vaccination certificate must be presented. Cash, check and credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express) are accepted.

For your convenience, we have included a list of veterinary clinics where our tags are sold.

- [Veterinary Clinics](#) in McHenry County
- [Veterinary Clinics](#) outside McHenry County (includes Wisconsin)

## Lost Tags:

If dog tags are lost, replacements can be purchased at our offices in Crystal Lake (100 N. Virginia Street) or Woodstock (2200 N. Seminary Avenue, Building A).