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## **Lost Animals**

### **Guideline Statement**

All local agencies should make every effort to maintain reports of lost animals.

### **Basis for Guideline**

Each year thousands of dogs and cats are reported as lost to local animal control agencies. Of those reported lost, occasionally an animal may be impounded, legally held, and destroyed. Lost animal reports can help to prevent this tragedy, if such reports are compared with impounded, injured, or dead animals.

### **Guideline Recommendation**

NACA recognizes that agencies charged with handling large volumes of animals on a day-to-day basis may not realistically be able to compare every animal against every lost animal report. But if such reports are kept, they can be organized to provide a valuable source for possible owners of impounded animals. First, insist that owners complete the form or report personally.

Strongly encourage owners to bring with them a current picture of their lost pet, so that the picture may accompany the report. Secondly, categorize reports by breeds. If the owner is uncertain of the breed, provide a chart which will help the owner determine the breed the animal most resembles, mixed breed files could be categorized by color, sex, and size, if efforts to categorize by possible breed mixture are unsuccessful. Ultimately, large volume shelters must stress to owners the vital importance of personal visits to the shelter for the purpose of looking for lost pets. Visits should fall within the legal holding periods for unlicensed animals, without exception, all injured and dead animals should be compared against the reports. Reports should be updated daily.

Reviewed/Revised by the NACA Corporate Office - 09/17/02

The foregoing Guideline has been affirmed as duly adopted by the NACA Board of Directors.

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