



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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20,000 cats go high tech Free program keeps pets and people together

Denver (August 25, 2009) More than 20,000 cats in the metro Denver area have received free microchip identification implants since September 2008 as part of the Chip Your Cat program.

Microchip technology as a way to identify pets has been around for 20 years, but cat owners have been slow to embrace it. It is estimated that less than 5 percent of all pets in the United States have been microchipped. Even more concerning is that less than 10 percent of lost cats brought to animal shelters are reunited with their owners, a statistic that the Chip Your Cat program hopes to radically change by providing FREE microchips and lifetime registrations for 150,000 cats in the six-county metro Denver area.

The Chip Your Cat program reached a milestone in July, having microchipped 20,000 cats, but “there are still thousands more cats in the Denver area needing microchip identification,” said Ralph Johnson, executive director of the Denver Area Veterinary Medical Society. “Pet owners should be aware that getting a microchip implant is a quick procedure and very similar to a vaccination. This brief procedure can make a big difference in recovering your pet if you get separated.” Johnson adds: “Many people feel that if their cats are kept inside they don’t need a microchip, yet one study found that 40 percent of cats reported missing were described as inside-only. Without identification it is extremely difficult to reunite these lost pets with their owners.”

A recent survey of members of the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association found that 75 - 90% of dog owners provide some sort of identification for their dogs, but only 20 - 40% of cat owners provide identification. The study found that one barrier to providing identification is a perception that cat collars are unsafe. A microchip ID implant counters that argument, as an implant can’t get caught on anything and unlike a tag, it won’t fall off. Another barrier is the belief that if a cat lives solely indoors, they do not need identification – however area shelters receive numerous cats that were once considered ‘inside only’ cats.

Cat owners living in Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson counties may receive a free microchip ID implant by scheduling an appointment with a participating veterinarian, or they may attend a scheduled microchip event at a participating shelter. Shelter events are held on a first-come, first-served basis.

Chip Your Cat is a collaboration among the Denver Area Veterinary Medical Society, the Dumb Friends League and the Metro Denver Shelter Alliance. The program is sponsored by Bayer resQ and HomeAgain, makers of the microchip implants. Seventy-seven veterinary clinics and five animal shelters are participating by providing this free service.

Interested cat owners can go to www.ChipYourCat.com for more details and to find a participating veterinary clinic or the date of a shelter event (also on facebook and twitter.) The offer of free microchips ends on September 30, 2009 so cat owners are encouraged to act quickly.

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(If space permits please include)

WHERE TO GO TO CHIP YOUR CAT

Animal shelters where you can have your cat chipped for free, at first come, first served events include:

Aurora Animal Shelter, 15750 E. 32nd Avenue, Aurora
Every Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to noon, except holidays

Cat Care Society, 5787 W. 6th Avenue, Lakewood
Third Thursday of each month, 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., except holidays

Denver Municipal Animal Shelter, 678 S. Jason Street, Denver
Every Thursday. 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., except holidays.

Dumb Friends League – 2080 S. Quebec Street, Denver
Tuesdays. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Fridays. 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Table Mountain Animal Center, 4105 Youngfield Street, Golden, CO
Every Wednesday and Friday from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., except holidays

The following veterinary clinics are providing free microchip identification implants for cats. Appointments are required, visit ChipYourCat.com for contact information. Veterinary clinics that would like to join the program should call the Denver Area Veterinary Medical Society at (303) 318-0447.

AURORA: Aurora Cat Vet (Billy Bear Cats, Inc), Banfield The Pet Hospital, Mission Viejo Veterinary Hospital, Mississippi Animal Hospital, Piney Creek Vet Clinic, Seven Hills Veterinary Center, Special Friends Veterinary Clinic

ARVADA: Adams County Animal Hospital, Care Animal Hospital, Jefferson Animal Clinic, Pets Vet of Arvada.

BRIGHTON: Banfield The Pet Hospital.

BROOMFIELD: Broadlands Vet Clinic, Mandalay Animal Hospital.

CASTLE ROCK: Brooklyn Veterinary Clinic, VCA Douglas County

CENTENNIAL: Aurora Animal Hospital, Banfield The Pet Hospital

DENVER: Banfield The Pet Hospital, The Center for Animal Wellness, Denver Animal Hospital, Denver Pet Hospital, Downtown Animal Care Center, Evans East Animal Hospital, Firehouse Animal Health Center Capitol Hill, Firehouse Animal Health Center Park Hill, Harrison Memorial Animal Hospital, Pets on Broadway, University Hills Animal Hospital, University Hills Hampden

Animal Clinic, VCA Alameda East, VCA Southeast Area Animal Hospital, Washington Park Veterinary Clinic PC.

ENGLEWOOD: All Cat Clinic, Cherrelyn Animal Hospital

GLENDALE: Banfield The Pet Hospital

GREENWOOD VILLAGE: Greenwood Village Vet Clinic.

GOLDEN: GoldenView Veterinary Hospital, Table Mountain Vet Clinic.

HIGHLANDS RANCH: Quebec Highlands Animal Clinic.

LAKEWOOD: Banfield The Pet Hospital, Dr. Bob's Vet Shop, Front Range Veterinary Clinic, VCA Anderson Animal Hospital.

LITTLETON: Banfield The Pet Hospital, Broadway Estates Veterinary Clinic, Centennial Veterinary Clinic, Columbine Animal Hospital, Firehouse Animal Health Center Ken Caryl, Firehouse Animal Health Center Littleton, Highland Animal Hospital, Redstone Animal Hospital, Southwest Veterinary Hospital

LONE TREE: Banfield The Pet Hospital, Lone Tree VMC, Purrfect Health Cat Hospital

KITTRIDGE: Harmony Animal Wellness

NORTHGLENN: Banfield The Pet Hospital

PARKER: Banfield The Pet Hospital

THORNTON: Banfield The Pet Hospital, Community Pet Hospital, Firehouse Animal Health Center.

WESTMINSTER: Banfield The Pet Hospital, Cheshire Cat Hospital, Pets Unlimited

WHEAT RIDGE: Westridge Veterinary Hospital, Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital.