



LEARN ABOUT
**THE DANGERS OF
900 MICROCHIPS**

GOOD NEWS

Most microchipping patents have expired, driving down prices and providing more choice in the marketplace.

BAD NEWS

It is now a buyer-beware free-for-all. The market is flooded with microchips that begin with the numbers 9-0-0 being produced by various Chinese manufacturers.

- This means multiple manufacturers are producing and selling some microchips with the same ID number.
- If two pets have the same microchip ID number, pet reunions are complicated or even impossible!

DO YOUR RESEARCH

No two pet microchip ID numbers should be the same. Please refer to Page 3 for samples of actual microchip ID number searches using <http://aaha.org/petmicrochiplookup>.

BEYOND REPUTATION, PRICE AND VALUE OF SERVICES...

HERE ARE 5 VERY IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR MICROCHIP PROVIDER.

1. Where are your microchips manufactured and who is the manufacturer?
2. Are your microchips ICAR compliant?
3. Does your company maintain LOT numbers and know who you sold any given microchip?
4. Does your company have a 24/7/365 pet recovery service that includes toll-free phone and online support?
5. Does your organization also participate in aaha.org/petmicrochiplookup, a free online microchip database reference tool provided by the American Animal Hospital Association?



SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS

GET THE FACTS ON MICROCHIPS

~ Lynn Gensamer, Humane Society for Greater Savannah - May, 2015



Savannah Morning News.
www.savannahnow.com

Since the early 1990's, microchipping has been recognized as the best way to identify a pet and help ensure that you and your lost pet are reunited.

Shelters around the country microchip their pets before adoption and register new owner contact information for each pet before he or she leaves the shelter. Up until recently, five companies have accounted for the manufacture and sale of almost all microchips in the United States: HomeAgain, 24 Petwatch, Avid, ResQ/Datamars/Banfield, AKC Reunite.

Each of these providers as its own specific prefix...followed by a registration number unique to each pet.

ALL AKC REUNITE MICROCHIPS BEGIN WITH 956

A universal scanner can identify the registration number that includes the microchip company. Each company provides its own online databases or 24/7 "hotlines" enabling shelters, veterinarians and pet owners easy and quick access to the registered pet owner, assuming the owner's contact information has been kept up to date. Importantly these core companies maintain chip lot number records that can be used to identify the organization that originally purchased the chip. This means that should there be no response to the registered contact information, the company can identify the vet hospital or animal shelter that purchased the chip, helping to provide a lead in the search for an owner.

Unfortunately there are many newer microchip companies that all use the same 900 company ID prefix number making it nearly impossible to distinguish the companies from one another. Tracking down an owner becomes considerably more difficult when it is a challenge simply to identify the microchip provider.

BUYING A 900-ONLY MICROCHIP MAY BE CHEAPER; BUT IS IT REALLY A BARGAIN? TURNS OUT THAT THESE COMPANIES RARELY KEEP A DATABASE OF OWNER REGISTRATIONS.

Buying a 900-only chip may be cheaper, but is it really a bargain? Turns out that these companies rarely keep a database of owner registrations. In fact, K9 microchips, one of the those 900 companies, has this wording on its website: "We make no promise to keep information on who purchases microchips, nor to document which microchips are shipped to which customers."

Humane Society for Greater Savannah recommends that all pet owners have their pets microchipped but only by one of the established companies. We encourage you to do

your homework and make sure the company is easily accessible, retains your contact information and reminds you when it is time to re-register.

"Some Pet Microchip Companies Acting Irresponsible" article next on page 5.



AAHA.ORG/PETMICROCHIPLOOKUP

AKC REUNITE MICROCHIP ENROLLMENT SEARCH EXAMPLES



Responsible organizations will track the microchips they sell and that are registered in their recovery service.

Lookup results for microchip # 9560000851XXXX enrolled with AKC Reunite.

Microchip enrolled with

Date Last Updated:
8/22/2013
For more information please visit:
<http://www.akcreunite.org/>
or call: 800-252-7894

Lookup results for microchip # 95600001424XXXX not enrolled with AKC Reunite.

Microchip enrolled with

(No information found in participating databases. Please see below for possible manufacturers.)

Microchip distributed/manufactured by

For more information please visit:
<http://www.akcreunite.org/>
or call: 800-252-7894

This is an example of an actual search of a 900 microchip with aaha.org/petmicrochiplookup. The user is left with a long list of potential companies to call - and none may actually be the seller of the microchip, meaning there is no way to reunite the pet with its owner.

Lookup results for a 900 microchip # 90000001424XXXX.

Microchip enrolled with

(No information found in participating databases. Please see below for possible manufacturers.)

Range matches

Distributors that sell microchips in the 900 shared microchip space:

- Arf ID (Peeva) (833-PEEVA-CO(733-8226))
- Homeward Bound Pet (844-643-HOME(4663))
- International Pet Registry (844-477-7387)
- International Equine Registry (800-431-6856)
- nanoCHIP (855-434-2447)
- Petstablished (855-684-3184 Ext.103)
- Save This Life (855-777-CHIP or 855-777-2447)
- SmartTag (866-603-6863)



STEVE DALE PET WORLD, LLC SOME PET MICROCHIP COMPANIES ACTING IRRESPONSIBLY

~ ©Steve Dale Pet World, LLC; Tribune Content Agency - May, 2015



Microchipping saves lives. This is an accepted fact among those in the veterinary and animal welfare community. However, some microchip companies may now be compromising a system that's reunited countless numbers of pets and their owners.



A small chip (approximately the size of a grain of rice) is injected into the pet. If a pet is lost, a universal scanner can "read" the data on the chip (no matter

which company originally sold the chip), ideally providing current contact information for the family of the pet, or at least identifying the chip provider.

The handful of established microchip providers have always made it easy for shelters, veterinarians and pet owners to contact them; reaching out online or calling a 24/7 "hotline" phone number. Once reached, the company may have information that can help locate a lost pet.

Until recent years, each microchip company had a distinct company ID prefix number. Today, however, there



are at least six microchip companies with the same 900 company ID prefix number, making them nearly impossible to distinguish from one another. These companies appear to play by their own rules, rather than by industry standards.

Increasingly, animal shelter officials are voicing their frustration, even outrage over these 900-only chip businesses because they mislead consumers and reduce chances that lost pets will be returned. "I can't figure these companies out; how they're even allowed to operate this way," says Abby

Smith, executive director of Felines & Canines, a Chicago, IL animal shelter.

The established microchip providers have dedicated ID numbers associated with their individual companies. For example, if scanned, AKC Reunite chips start with 956. These numbers are used to look up contact information for a pet's owner.

With the 900-only chips, the number on any individual chip could be associated with any number of companies. "Animal shelters don't have the time to sit on the phone and try five or six or more companies (when there's a 900-only prefix code). We don't even know for sure who all these companies are," Smith says.

"I CAN'T FIGURE THESE COMPANIES OUT; HOW THEY'RE EVEN ALLOWED TO OPERATE THIS WAY."

~ Abby Smith, Executive Director of Felines & Canines, a Chicago, IL animal shelter.

"Some Pet Microchip Companies Acting Irresponsibly" article continues on page 5.



STEVE DALE PET WORLD, LLC

SOME PET MICROCHIP COMPANIES ACTING IRRESPONSIBLY *(continued)*

~ ©Steve Dale Pet World, LLC; Tribune Content Agency - May, 2015



Meghan Conti, Virginia Beach, VA Animal Enforcement Officer adds, "We've called these companies when lost pets have a 900-only chip prefix number, if there's a phone number to even call. Of course, we leave a message, and to date, not ever a single phone call back. We sure don't get pets back to owners this way. Who are these people?"

Conti answers her own rhetorical question: "The 900 companies are in the business of selling chips, all right, but (they're) obviously not in the business of recovering lost pets, which is the entire idea."

The appeal of the 900-only chips, by all accounts, is that they simply cost less for unaware veterinarians or shelters to buy. Sometimes that savings is passed on to the general public, but perhaps at the expense of a pet's life. (Microchips typically cost from about \$40 to \$60, including registration of owner contact information.)

Buying a 900-only chip may be no bargain. One of those 900 companies, K9Microchips, has this wording on its own website: "We make no promise to keep information on who purchases microchips, nor to document which microchips are shipped to which customers."

The implication is that the company makes no promise to maintain a database of customers. (My emails to K9Microchips have generated no

"WE'VE CALLED THESE COMPANIES WHEN LOST PETS HAVE A 900-ONLY CHIP PREFIX NUMBER...NOT EVER A SINGLE CALL BACK."

~ Meghan Conti, Virginia Beach, VA
Animal Enforcement Officer

response. Reaching out to two other 900 microchip companies likewise yielded no response).

Conti and Smith aren't the only ones who've been unable to reunite any dogs or cats with their owners using the data from 900-only chips. "I've lost sleep over these issues because I have no doubt that pets have lost their lives," says John Bowman, supervisor Norman, OK Animal Welfare. "Municipal shelter systems only have so much space. If an animal can't be identified, then there's a cost associated for an animal to be housed in a shelter. And if the pet isn't claimed by the owner, the reality is that not all pets get adopted."

Conti adds, "And that poor family who lost a pet thought they were doing the right thing by microchipping, not

knowing that they may have purchased one of these 900-only chips. In reality, they may never see their pet again."

Now, what people with 900-chip numbers can do is to re-register, or register their chip number with most established companies, the cost is about \$10 to \$25, depending on the company.

Several years back, to help everyone involved navigate the often confusing world of microchipping, the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), a leading proponent of microchipping, began a non-branded online "pet look up service." By entering a microchip number on the AAHA look-up site, individuals have another way to determine the company a chip belongs to. However, some 900-only companies don't participate in this program.

The lesson here is, buyer beware. "Of course, companies must be reputable," says Dr. Michael Cavanaugh, AAHA executive director. "Microchipping is more than about getting a microchip into a pet; it's about pet owners updating their information when they move or change contact information, and it's about pet recovery. A microchip without a responsible recovery service means little."

"The Microchips Maze - Buyer Beware!" article next on page 6.



LOST DOGS OF WISCONSIN THE MICROCHIP MAZE - BUYER BEWARE!

~ Lost Dogs of Wisconsin - May 26 2015



The big five microchip companies have been assigned a designated manufacturer's source code by the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR) based on the volume of their sales. When we can identify the microchip company by the prefix, the owner can then call the company or go online to their website and make sure their information is up to date and current. Some companies will charge a fee for this service.

The small microchip companies do not have a designated source code. They share the 900 prefix (shared by over 100 companies worldwide) So, at an event when our scanner pulls up a microchip number that begins with the numbers 900 – we're left scratching our heads. There are at least six American companies who sell the 900 prefix microchips (made in China) at reduced prices to shelters, vet clinics and rescues. Without an identifying prefix we are not able to determine which brand of microchip is inserted in the pet.

Now consider the found pet brought into a shelter or vet clinic. With a designated prefix that is easily recognizable, shelter staff or vet clinic staff can identify which company the microchip is from and can hopefully make one simple phone call to retrieve the owner's information. When the system

works, a found pet can be home within a few hours of going missing.

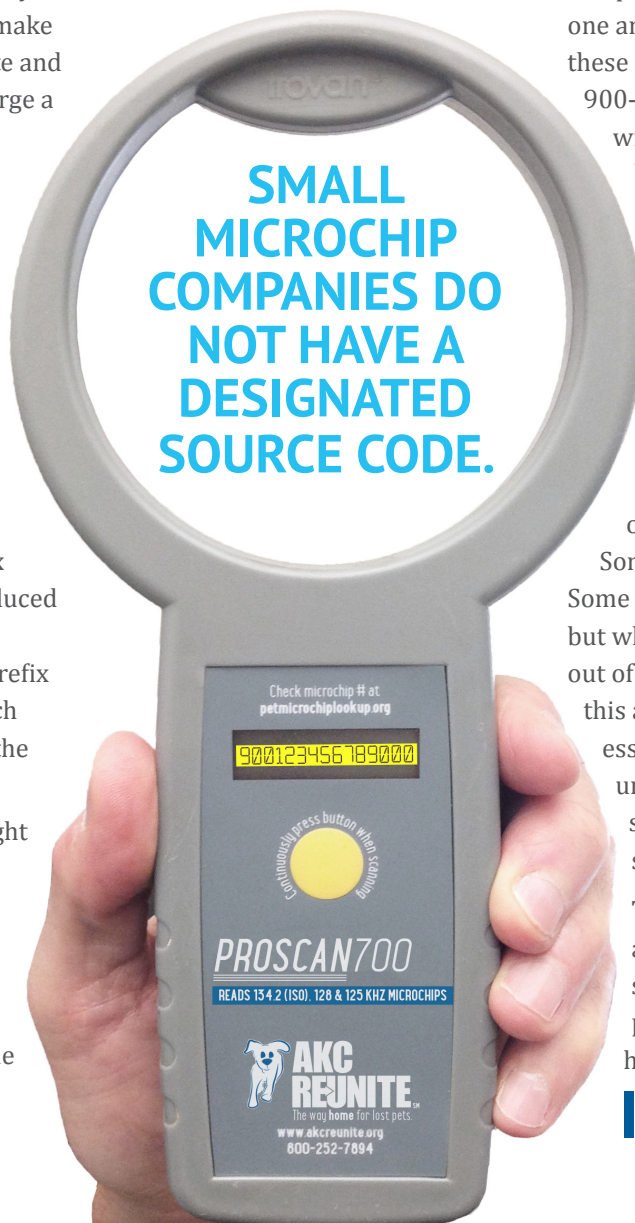
When a pet implanted with a 900 prefix microchip is brought in, it is a different matter. Shelter staff, animal control officers and veterinarians and vet staff are busy people. They don't have

time to wade through the quagmire of microchip lookup tools and websites. They don't have time to email each manufacturer or sit on hold waiting for a customer service representative that may or may not be able to help them. They may have to call all six companies before they get the right one and they may not even realize these companies exist! A couple of the 900-prefix microchip providers come with a collar tag. Kudos to them, but that only helps if the tag is on the collar and/or doesn't fall off while the pet is missing.

Several of these companies are trying to start their own database; some free, some for a fee. Some have manned call centers, some don't. One is a "google chip" but if you use any other search engine, it's useless. Some only allow email contact. Some promise "lifetime registration" but what does that mean if they go out of business? Who has time to sort this all out? Remember, time is of the essence. A microchipped pet may go unclaimed because vet clinic and shelter staff don't have time to sort through the maze.

This is truly a case of "penny wise and pound foolish". A few dollars saved on the front end when purchasing microchips can cause heartbreak on the back end.

*"The Microchip Maze - Buyer Beware!"
article continues on page 7.*



LOST DOGS OF WISCONSIN THE MICROCHIP MAZE - BUYER BEWARE! *(continued)*

~ *Lost Dogs of Wisconsin* - May 26 2015



Rescues, shelters and vet clinics trying to save money on their microchips are putting their clients at risk. Unfortunately, the unsuspecting owner who thought they were doing the right thing by microchipping their pet will be the one to suffer.

This troubling screen shot was captured from the website of one of the 900 companies, K9 Microchips. They actually admit that they won't be responsible for keeping track of who they sold the microchips to. "K9Microchips.com & its representatives are in no way obligated to assist anyone in any way that did not directly do business with K9Microchips.com. We make no promise to keep information on who purchases microchips, nor to document which microchips are shipped to which customers."

This same scenario is applicable to most 900 chips. The purchasing organization must do the microchip company's job and track it back to themselves because they cannot rely on the microchip company to keep these records.

U.S. microchip companies that sell the 900 shared manufacturer code (there are over 100 companies worldwide that use the shared code) include: Smart Tag, Save This Life, nanoCHIP, K9 Microchip, Homeward Bound and Petestablished.



Our advice to the microchip consumer and purchasing animal welfare organizations and vets – stick with one of the top five companies. Your pet (or your client's pet) is depending on you to help bring them safely home.

AKC ReuniteSM | Avid[®] | Datamars[®]
HomeAgain[®] | 24 Petwatch[®]

