

# Prevention of a Lost Sheltie

(These tips are based on many years of experience with how Shelties are lost)

- Check the locks on your doors and windows frequently in order to be sure that your dog is safely confined when you leave it alone in the house, and to ensure your dog cannot get out of the house when jumping against a door or screen even when you are home.
- Use a leash or crate your Sheltie as people are coming/going from the house to eliminate the chance the dog may slip out. Be especially vigilant with your Sheltie and opening doors if there are kids living in the home or visiting.
- Use a doggie seatbelt or crate in the car, and be sure to have a leash securely clipped to the dog and securely in hand prior to opening the car door.
- Maintain your yard fence to keep it dog-proof. Check for gaps between slats, at the bottom of the fence and between posts, gates and the house, especially with weather changes when ground settling could result in the fence shifting. Ensure that there are no objects near the fence upon which the Sheltie can climb to jump over the fence. This includes snowdrifts in the winter. Check that gates are closed before releasing your Sheltie into your fenced yard (we suggest installing locks on gates).
- Supervise your dog when outside. Never allow your dog to roam free. Leash it at all times. A Sheltie will go into near feral mode when lost, and is extremely difficult to find and catch. No amount of training will guarantee that your Sheltie will make the right decision 100% of the time. A dog adopted from MNSR MUST BE ON-LEASH AT ALL TIMES when in an unfenced area (even at home), FOR THE LIFETIME OF THE DOG.
- When using a tie-out, you must supervise the dog at all times. A dog has no protection from people or other animals when on a tie-out, and dogs have been known to chew through a tie-out in a very short period of time.
- Use a Martingale/Greyhound/No Slip collar or harness when walking your Sheltie. Shelties can easily back out of a regular collar.
- Check frequently to see that your dog wears his collar, with a tag with your current contact information, along with an alternate contact. Additionally, always have a current rabies tag and pet license, AND the MNSR TAG attached to your dog's collar.
- Dogs can lose their collars/tags on the streets. For added security, consider inserting a microchip implant in your dog and register the chip's number with one of the available registries of your area. If your dog gets stolen or lost and gets dumped or found, it can be identified through the microchip ID number. Permanent identification, either in the form of a microchip or tattoo, is also useful in case you ever have to prove to the law that this dog is indeed yours and you are the one to whom the dog should be returned.
- Do not leave your dog tied up outside shops, gyms, classrooms, offices, training facilities, etc., and do not leave your dog unattended inside your vehicle, even if it's locked. There are numerous reports of dogs stolen from these situations.
- Be wary of strangers expressing an interest in your dog. Remember that your dog is your responsibility. Do not leave it in the care of seemingly friendly strangers.
- Keep an action checklist in a visible location, along with the current phone numbers of emergency contacts for individuals and organizations (MNSR) you will need to call in case of an emergency. Also keep a copy in your vehicle for when you are traveling.
- Keep a current local street map handy. It can greatly assist your search in case you need to coordinate a search unit.
- Ensure you have current and reliable color photos of your dog that clearly show all your dog's characteristics, so that you can make a big publicity fuss and make it extremely difficult for thieves to try to keep your dog. Update photos annually. You need to photograph your dog's head and body from different angles (top, front, head shot, side-on, standing, etc.). Focus especially on any special markings.
- Write a simple and clear description of your dog and store it in the computer's memory-along with the most recent set of photographs-in order to create posters/flyers.
- Search in advance and save the web pages of your local animal control authorities for immediate retrieval. This can assist you to immediately publicize its disappearance online through the multiple online services.

\*MNSR has a Lost Pet Brochure on the website (put together by Second Chance Animal Rescue) with phone numbers for impound facilities. We also have a Finding Your Lost Sheltie guide (specific to Shelties), and information on online resources.

PLEASE REMEMBER IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP YOUR SHELTY SAFE.