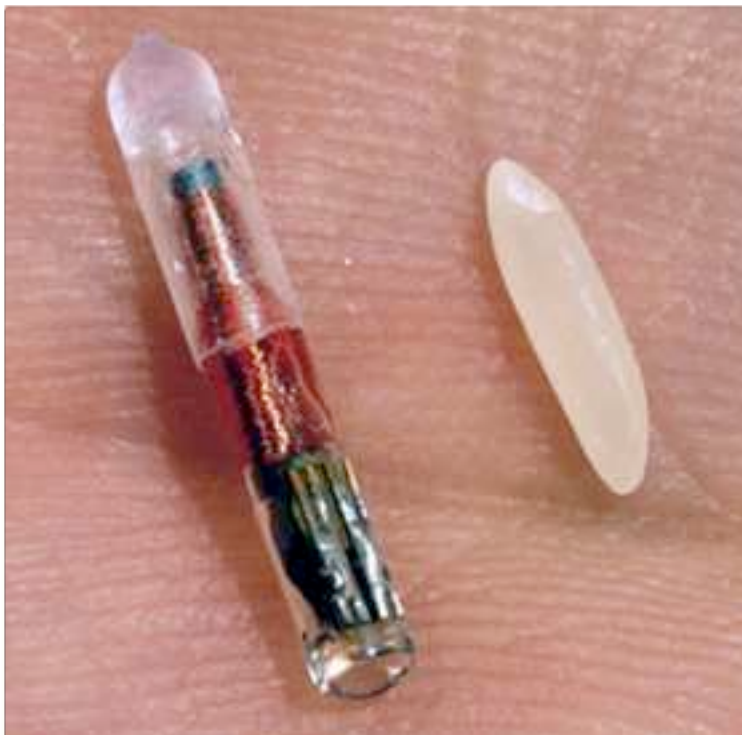




Chip N Activate! by Kristina Estlund

As the SBTCA Rescue Chair, I recently pulled two gorgeous Staffords from a shelter; an intact male and intact female. Both were young--12-14 months old--and both chipped! But neither chip was activated. A day of phone calls and research led me all the way to Avid Canada for the female, where the trail ended at the CKC. The male, through international calls and emails led to Planet-ID in Germany and then from there to a "WinVet" in Czechoslovakia. Again, the trail ended. No one had ever registered the chips and no record on who purchased/implanted them.



How can these companies sell microchips and not have a record of who bought them? How do dogs get chipped and there is no way to trace it back to the person who implanted the chip? Because no organization tracks chips unless activated.

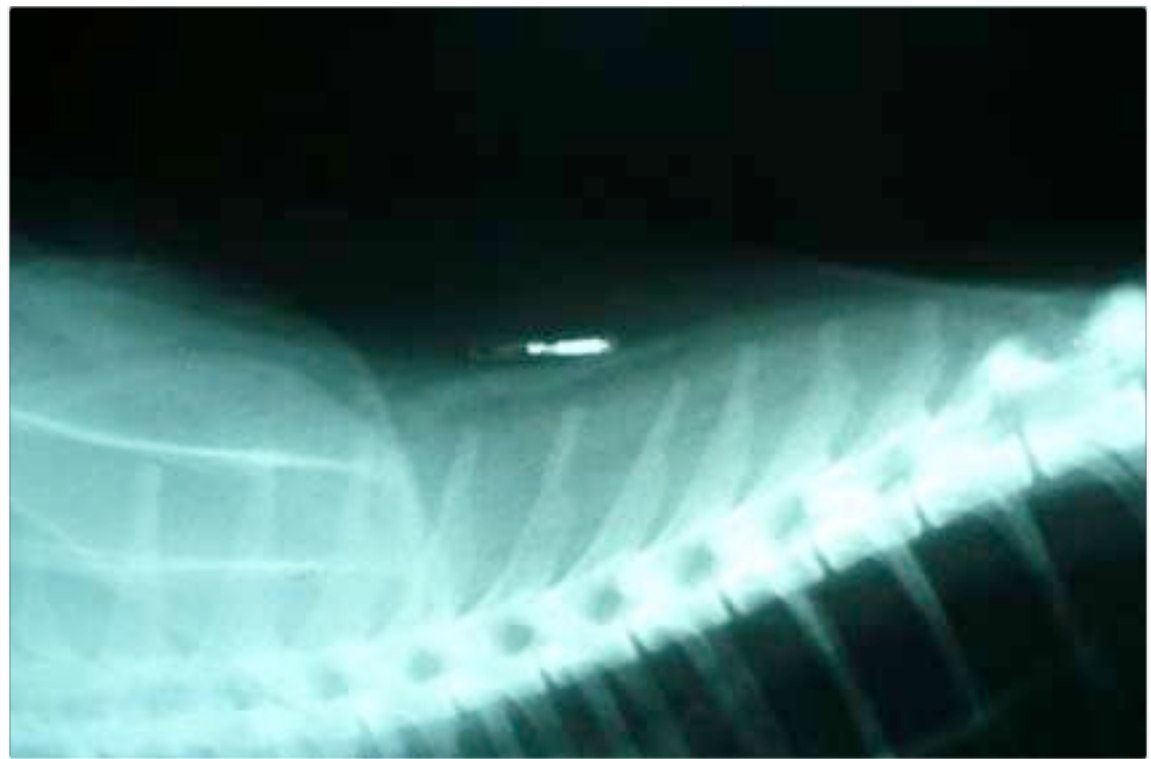
No one, not the original vet, the breeder or the owners, ever activated them so we have no way to track their history. The shelter said the male was chipped, but not the female. She was. Their altering vet found both chips and said they were with three possible companies: Res'q,



In my research trying to track both chips, I realized that AVID completely lost its initial foothold on chipping and the companies now run in the dozens. When I first microchipped, there was just AVID, and a flat fee of \$19.99. Here we are a dozen or more years later and microchipping runs \$10-\$40 (I paid \$40 for my pup recently) and an additional \$19.99 to

activate. Add to that the various microchip services, online registries and 800 numbers, and my head was spinning. The only way I was able to narrow the potential chip companies down was by calling the AKC, who registers breeds from all over the world. They were able to give me leads as well as many potential chip companies.

In two days of research, I ended up with a long list of microchip companies: AKC/CAR, EIDAP, Microchip ID Systems, Found Animals, HomeAgain, InfoPet, PetKey, PetLink, AVID, AVID Canada, Save This Life, SmartTag, 24PetWatch, Digital Angel, Banfield, Bayer resQ, ALLFLEX®, Schering Plough, Lifechip, Crystal Tag, Datamars, Trovan, Destron



Fearing...not to mention just as many international manufacturers.

If your chip is activated with one of the above-mentioned companies, do not pay for any other registry. It's overwhelming how many sites online there are. I was referred to this site <http://www.petmicrochiplookup.org> (or AAHA Universal Pet Microchip Lookup) and told they would have all dog chip info. I assumed they mean they could tell me that the number I input was for my Penny and I needed to contact AVID. It did not. It said it was possibly an AVID chip. The same for two more of my dogs. I can't imagine what a new adopting owner must go through and no wonder so many do not activate the chips.



HOW A PET MICROCHIP WORKS

Veterinarians can implant these tiny devices in all kinds of pets – including cats, dogs, birds and reptiles. Each chip carries a unique number that is linked in an online database to the name and contact information of the pet's owner.

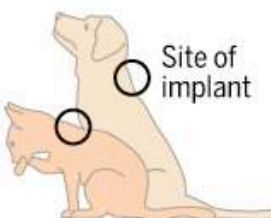
KEY PARTS

1. **Microchip** holds the unique ID number.
2. **Tuning capacitor** receives power from an external scanner and sends it to the microchip.
3. **Copper antenna coil** then transmits microchip's information to scanner.
4. **Biocompatible glass capsule** – nontoxic and designed to prevent allergic reactions – surrounds components.



IMPLANTATION

A needle is used to inject the chip between a dog or cat's shoulder blades. The procedure does not require anesthesia.



REGISTRATION

The pet and its owner are enrolled in a database, either by mail or on the Internet. But owners must keep their contact information up to date for the system to work properly.

DETECTION

The chip has no battery. It is energized by the radio waves of hand-held scanners used by animal shelters and veterinarians.



SACRAMENTO ANIMAL SHELTER

The city shelter offers pet microchipping for \$20, which includes database enrollment. All dogs and cats adopted from the shelter are implanted with microchips. Information: (916) 808-7387

Sources: howstuffworks.com, city of Sacramento Animal Care Services

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I have only had chips with AVID and HomeAgain. I did not know the other companies existed. I thought there were just these two and AKC/CAR. With AVID, you have to deal with them directly, phone, fax or snail mail, they do not have an online sign in or database. HomeAgain, which one of my dogs is with, does have an online registry and database. You can update photos and they do offer an annual \$17.99 membership for their additional unneeded services. What I have done is make sure I have them all activated, their forms and confirmation in their hard copy files, chip numbers and organization name in my phone and in the online “AKC Manage Dogs” for each.

The moral of my story is ALL breeders need to activate their microchipped pups before they leave your home. Without that, it's pointless to assume if a dog is lost they will be recovered.

We rechipped and activated the two international rescues with the AKC/CAR chips.

Kristina Estlund writes for the AKC Gazette representing the Staffordshire Bull Terrier Club of America and can be reached at Gazette@SBTCA.com

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