



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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www.houstonhumane.org

## **Houston Humane Society Wants You to BE ALERT!** *Family pets could be thieves' next target*

**HOUSTON (December 28, 2011) — The Houston Humane Society wants you to Be Alert!** In recent weeks we've heard several alarming stories of thieves posing as various officials to rob homes, but it's not just your cash and jewels you need to protect. In North Carolina there have been reported cases of thieves posing as Animal Control officers hoping to steal family pets. It is believed these thieves steal the animals in hopes of selling them to turn a quick profit. Though there have not been any reported cases in Texas, the Houston Humane Society wants you to be on the alert. Here are a few tips to keep your pet safe:

- Animal Control Officers, just like police officers, fire marshals, and other city/county officials are required to carry proper identification and badges. Ask to see it!
- Animal Control Officers are required to be in uniform and drive marked vehicles.
- Don't hesitate to call your local animal control office and verify the officer's identification and reason for visiting.
- Houston Humane Society does NOT pick up stray animals, and our cruelty division is handled by law enforcement driving official vehicles. If an individual identifies his or herself as representing Houston Humane Society, ask to see their identification.
- The absolute best way to protect your pet from thieves is to never leave them unattended outside.
- Make sure your pet is microchipped and wearing current tags at all times. Also, keep them up to date on vaccinations, including rabies. Animal Control Officers will often ask to see a copy of your pet's rabies certification.

*About the HHS: The Houston Humane Society is a private, non-profit animal welfare organization dedicated to ending cruelty, abuse and the overpopulation of animals. The HHS does NOT receive any government funding or operating funds from national animal welfare organizations, and relies solely on donations, special events and program services. For the 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the HHS has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator.*

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