

Report Concerning Disposal of Dead Dogs at Commercial Breeding Facilities in Missouri

MISSOURIANS FOR THE PROTECTION OF DOGS/YES! ON PROP B

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Summary

As a result of several federal Freedom of Information Act and Missouri Sunshine Law requests, Missourians for the Protection of Dogs/YES! on Prop B has collected the following information related to the disposal of deceased dogs at large-scale breeding or brokerage facilities. This report includes a description of records related to the disposal of dead dogs at a Hunte Corporation facility, followed by a description of records received concerning dozens of discarded dead dogs at an open dump site in the woods, along with photographs. The report also includes notes and photographs excerpted from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) inspection reports and enforcement records related to dog mortality at large-scale breeding facilities. Ten of the facilities mentioned in this report are currently licensed by the MDA, and all of them were at one time state-licensed.

The Hunte Corporation

In response to a complaint that two ponds were polluted by mass puppy graves on a property owned by the Hunte Corporation (Hunte), the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) investigated a Hunte facility on Sorrel Road in Goodman, Missouri on 11/10/03. The investigation revealed violations of the Missouri Clean Water Law and Solid Waste Management Law unrelated to the dog disposal. A Hunte veterinarian estimated that the facility was disposing of dead dogs at a volume of about 100 pounds per month, and an inspector from the Missouri Department of Agriculture separately told DNR that Hunte was burying an average of 220 pounds/month of dead dogs. Considering that Hunte deals primarily in puppies rather than mature dogs, 220 pounds a month could amount to the death of 50-100 dogs each month (or over a 1,000 dogs a year) depending on breed.

Using Hunte's veterinarian's own estimate, DNR found that Hunte was in violation of Missouri law, which states that no more than 1,000 pounds of dead animals can be buried/acre/year. DNR suggested incineration as an alternative method of dead animal disposal for Hunte's large volume of dead dogs each month.

DNR sent a letter to Hunte noting, among other pollution violations, that dead animal disposal must be in compliance with the dead animal law. Within 45 days Hunte was asked to submit to DNR a plan for correcting the violations. In a 12/5/03 letter to DNR, Hunte disputed the disposal of dead animal violations.

A Sunshine Law request to DNR indicates that DNR never followed up on its investigation with Hunte. Communications with an Environmental Engineer for Construction Permits in DNR's Air Pollution Control Program headquarters office reveal that Hunte does not have a construction permit for an animal incinerator. This was also confirmed by the Air Pollution Control official in DNR's Southwest Regional Office (in whose region Hunte is located). Although there is an agriculture exemption for animal incinerator permits, the Air Pollution Control official confirmed that a facility such as Hunte would not be covered by the exemption, and would need a permit. If they have an incinerator without a permit, it would be illegal.

It is currently unclear how many dead dogs are disposed of by the Hunte Corporation each month, whether such dogs are buried or incinerated, and whether Hunte is in compliance with state laws concerning the disposal of dead animals. Additional investigation is warranted.

DNR complaint concerning dozens of dogs discarded at an open dump site (potentially from breeders Cody and Christy Harmon of Lebanon, MO)

Through Sunshine Law requests, we received the following information concerning dead dogs who were dumped in an open site in the woods near Lebanon, Missouri.

- DNR received a complaint on 3/6/2008 about open dump burning – about 40 dogs were dumped and burned after being recently killed.
- Other waste in the dump (dog food cans, dog vaccine syringes, etc.) with names of a local dog kennel implicated commercial dog breeders Cody and Christy Harmon of Lebanon, MO.
- According to DNR's Report of Investigation, the Laclede County Sheriff's Office investigation indicated that Cody Harmon was the owner of a dog kennel named Double C Ranch. Harmon was questioned by the Sheriff's Department and stated that he had recently sold a truck with trash in the back but that the truck contained no animal carcasses when he sold it. After being taken to the dump site Harmon confirmed that a lot of the trash did come from his facility, and that the person who purchased his truck must have dumped the trash at the site.
- The DNR investigator also interviewed Cody Harmon, who again asserted that the dog carcasses found at the site did not come from his kennel.
- It appears no government official followed up to establish whose dogs these were, whether the Mr. Harmon's assertion that the dogs were not his was accurate, and

whether there were any violations of the state animal cruelty code involved in this event.

- The below photos received from DNR shows some of the dead dogs (large and small) found at this open dump site.





Further research reveals that the Harmons are currently (2010) ACFA licensed (CB-6461), though not USDA licensed. Paula Walters, who is reportedly the mother of Christi Harmon, also runs a dog kennel in Lebanon, MO and is also currently ACFA licensed (CB-6907). Paula Walters used to be USDA licensed, but her license was cancelled 9/28/2009. It appears that at least as of 8/29/2009, the Harmons were still selling dogs – in a phone communication an HSUS investigator was told that the Harmons had a litter of Newfoundland puppies for sale.

The Harmons have some of the worst online complaints from people who allegedly purchased very sick dogs from them, including dogs that died or had to be euthanized. Some examples of the complaints on ripoffreport.com about the Harmons are as follows:

- Complainant received smelly, dirty, skinny, itchy Newfoundland puppy with bleeding sores under her legs, tummy, chest and ears - diagnosed with Sarcoptic Mange. Breeder did not return complainant's calls or emails.
- Another complainant also received Newfoundland puppy with mange.
- Received Clumber Spaniel puppy with kennel cough and without AKC papers when it was advertised as full AKC registration and pedigree.
- Received Newfoundland puppy that had to have 2 ACL knee repairs and one total hip replacement before the age of 18 months.
- Received puppy with coccidia, kennel cough, and yeast infection in ears.
- Received puppy covered in poop, with loose stools and mange, and potentially needing double hip replacement.
- Purchased a Shar Pei puppy, but received a dog that was mixed breed.
- Owner of a small kennel in MO claims she was sold a dog with brucellosis that had to be euthanized, but was refused a refund.
- Received a puppy that had a broken hip and mange - returned it and received another puppy that also had mange, kennel cough, giardia and worms.
- Received Newfoundland puppy with a bad case of mange and bleeding - breeder became unreachable.
- Received emaciated puppy who was half the weight he was supposed to be for his breed.
- Received Chihuahua puppy that had parvovirus and died - breeder didn't give refund or pay vet bills.
- Received Newfoundland puppy with sarcoptic mange - no response from breeder.
- Received puppy with severe weight loss, skin lesions and dermatitis.
- Received West Highland white terrier puppy and within 1 wk it was dead of parvovirus - breeder refused refund or to offer new puppy.
- Received Coton De Tulear puppy which was far from breed standard, filthy and had bad case of worms.
- Received Pomeranian puppy with parvovirus who was put down.

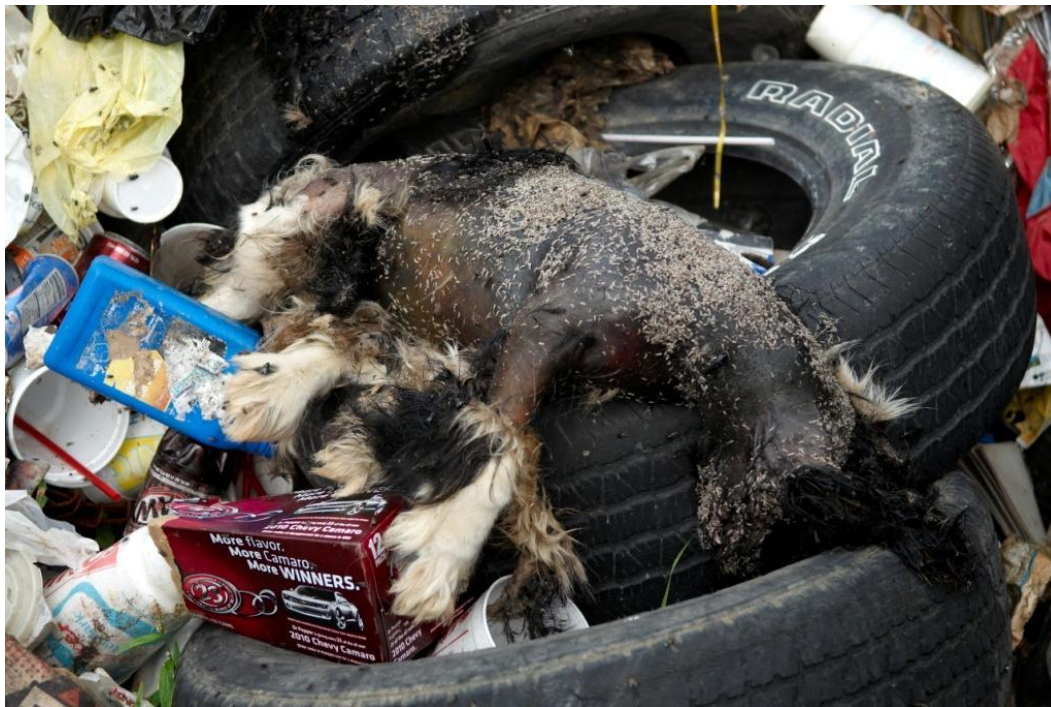
Excerpts from USDA and MDA Records Related to Dog Mortality

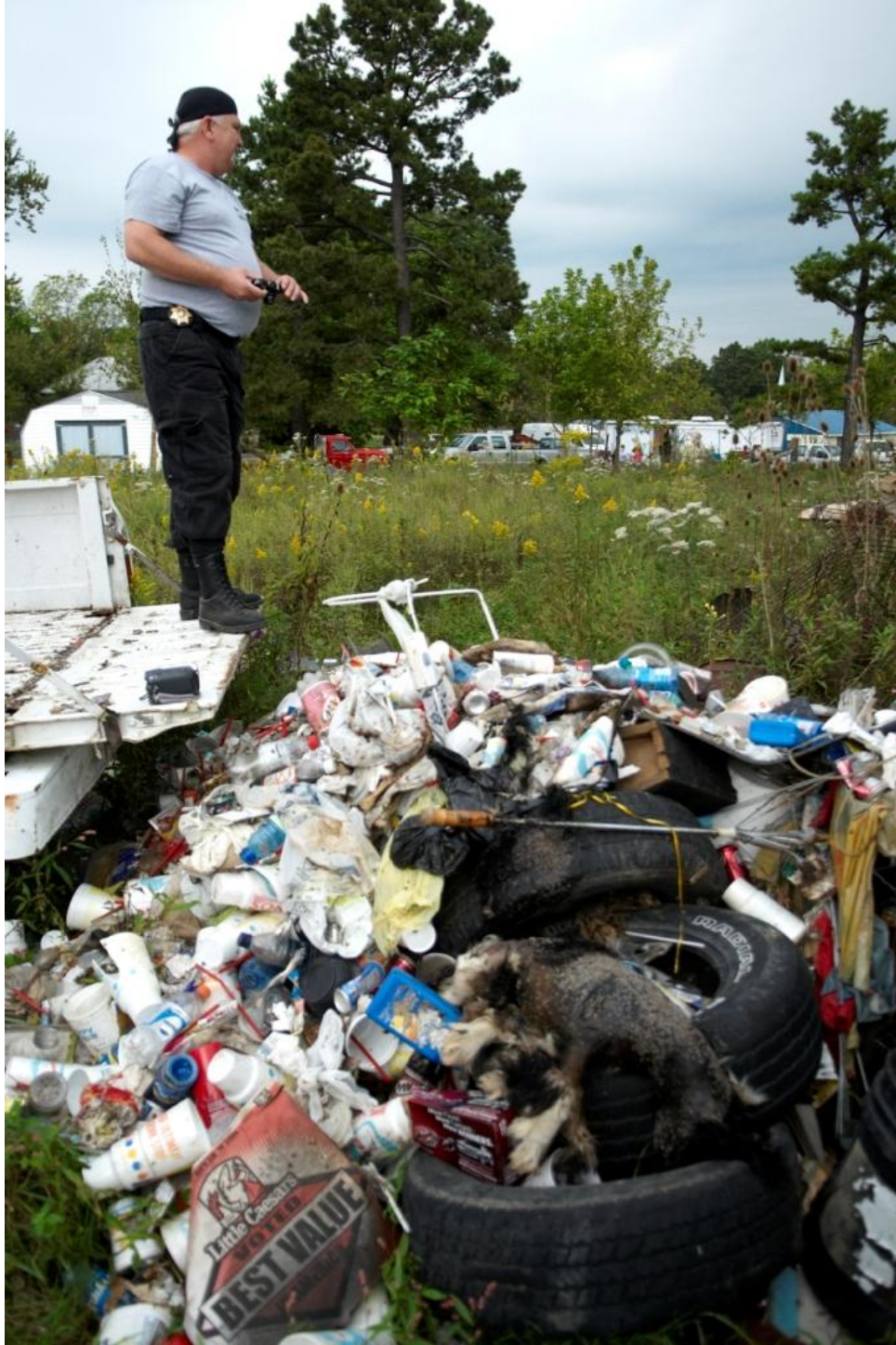
All of the below facilities were apparently once licensed by the State of Missouri, and some still are. MDA took enforcement action against some of these facilities, mostly in the form of stipulated settlement agreements where the licensee agreed to disperse their kennels. To our knowledge, no enforcement action for improper disposal of dead animals has been taken against any of these breeders other than Tim King.

Tim King, Doolittle Kennel, Rolla MO

Not currently MDA licensed; previously licensed as CB-7495; USDA license cancelled 5/17/2010

The following photos were taken by the Humane Society of Missouri (HSMO) during a September 15, 2009 raid of Mr. King's facility, where dead dogs were seen thrown on top of piles of trash.





The following quotes related to Mr. King's facility were taken from both MDA and USDA inspection and enforcement files.

- "At the time of the warrant service, we still noticed the smell of dead or decaying animal(s) in the vicinity of the house." 9/15/2009 Notes of Bonnie Dean, Animal Cruelty Taskforce, HSMO regarding warrant served on Tim King, Doolittle Kennel, Rolla, MO
- "At the back of the truck was a trash pile and at the top of this pile was a dead dog that had been thrown onto the pile. There was also a dog fetus that had been tossed onto the pile as well. The adult dog had been there approx a week, just long enough that the maggots had been able to strip the top layers of skin and the hair had fallen off. The owners were questioned and stated that the dog had broken its neck somehow and they had tossed it onto the pile...This dog, with the fetuses that were found, totaled 4 deceased animals that the owners were aware of and that were found on the property that had not been properly disposed of." 9/15/2009 Notes of Bonnie Dean, Animal Cruelty Taskforce, HSMO regarding warrant served on Tim King, Doolittle Kennel, Rolla, MO
- "In another enclosure (South side of main dog building)---housing an adult female Cocker Spaniel and her male puppy---the puppy appeared to be very depressed and lethargic. According to the licensee, there was originally seven puppies in this litter, but all of the littermates were born dead." USDA inspection of 4/08

Margaret Jewell Bond, J.B. Precious Puppies, Newton County

The following photos were taken by the Humane Society of Missouri during a 2/19/2009 raid of the facility. Ms. Bond has been previously licensed by the state and at the time was operating on a suspended license.¹



¹ <http://www.koamtv.com/global/story.asp?s=9875082>



Jodi Craft, Safe Haven Puppy Rescue/Rise-n-Shine Kennels, Bland MO

Not currently licensed; previously state licensed as RQ-6411 and CB-6598; Not USDA licensed.

The following photos were taken at Ms. Craft's facility by an MDA inspector on 3/21/2008. This is the description concerning this particular dog:

- "The dead dog was in an advanced stage of rigor. In addition the area surrounding the anus held a yellowish, pasty excrement." 3/21/2008 Photograph taken by Mary Martin, MDA Animal Health Officer at facility of Jodie Craft, Safe Haven Puppy Rescue/Rise-n-Shine Kennels, Bland, MO





The following quotations were taken from MDA enforcement records.

- “A dead dog was discovered on this inspection. It was housed with 3 other dogs. At the time of inspection, no one had observed any dogs. Dog was supposedly alert at 5 pm the previous day. ... According to the licensee, a chocolate labradoodle was found dead on March 21st, a white Husky was found dead on March 22nd, and a black Lab mix was found dead on March 23rd.” MDA inspection of 3/31/2008
- “At least 3 labradoodles, 11 Great Danes, a Husky, a chocolate labradoodle, a labrador mix, and a Beagle/Labrador mix have died (presumably of parvovirus) since March 15th. The majority of those dogs have died since March 31st. ... These circumstances of high mortality require that a veterinarian visit the premise to oversee adequate veterinary care. This item has been cited as critical, meaning that it directly affects the health and welfare of the animals at the kennel. A veterinarian must visit the site in a timely manner to consult on the health issues.” MDA inspection of 7/16/2008
- “The licensee needs to get an attending veterinarian to visit the site and consult on animal health issues that are being faced. There has been no meaningful consultation

with a veterinarian since March 15th. At least 18 dogs have died since that point in time.” MDA inspection of 7/16/2008

- “A dead dog was seized and taken to the University of Missouri Veterinary Medicine’s Diagnostic Laboratory for a full necropsy.” MDA inspection of 3/31/2008
- “Out of the 19 dogs that Ms. Craft-Long has reported as having died, 15 have occurred since the temporary restraining order was put into place. Three poodle puppies were recorded as dying on the same day that we witnessed her splash water, bleach, and feces onto the puppies while demonstrating her cleaning practices.” 6/4/2008 Memorandum from Matt Rold, MDA to Mary Bryan, Assistant AG and Jerry Eber, ACFA Program Veterinarian regarding Jodie Craft-Long, Safe Haven Puppy Rescue/Rise-n-Shine Kennels, Bland, MO
- “According to Ms. Craft, the Husky and black Lab mix both died of parvovirus while the puppy inside the house was stillborn. Mary Martin asked if a veterinarian had made a diagnosis or performed a necropsy on these dogs. Ms. Craft said that she had made the assumption herself. When Mary Martin inquired about the bodies, Ms. Craft explained that she had burned them. There was a large pile of ashes in one of the kennels.” 4/1/2008 email by Matt Rold, MDA to Mary Bryan and Jerry Eber regarding Jodie Craft, Safe Haven Puppy Rescue/Rise-n-Shine Kennels, Bland, MO

Deanna Brundage, Mercer MO

USDA license cancelled (43-A-4941) Aug. 2008, not currently MDA state-licensed

- “Licensee stated that at least seven and possibly as many as ten animals were shot by her boyfriend approximately one week before Thanksgiving. She stated that the animals were shot in the head using a 30-30 rifle. She stated that some of the bodies were burned and others were hauled off to an unknown location by her boyfriend. She provided the following information concerning animals that were shot. USDA inspection of 12/07
 1. Cocker spaniel; female; #21; microchip 043-059-273; killed because of ‘tumors on her udder’.
 2. Cocker spaniel; female; #23; microchip 083-045-283; killed because of ‘tumors on her udder’.
 3. Maltese; male; #20; microchip 086-768-543; DOB = 8-13-01; killed because he had hair loss, she dipped him, and he did not improve.
 4. West Highland white terrier; female; #33; killed because she aborted two weeks before she was due to deliver.
 5. Poodle; female; #26; microchip 091-081-107; killed because she never would get bred.
 6. Bichon fries; male; #28
 7. Schnauzer; male; #15; killed because he started losing weight.”

- “Overnight last night, two cocker spaniel/ bichon fries puppies (DOB = Dec. 9, 2007) were found dead in the enclosure by the licensee. Overnight lows in the area were in the mid to low 20’s. In addition, another poodle-type dog was found inside a shelter in an outdoor enclosure that licensee had previously stated was not currently being used for animals. There was no bedding present in that shelter and the animal was emaciated with prominent ribs, hips, vertebrae, and a tucked abdomen. Brief physical examinations were performed on the remainder of the dogs in the facility. Every dog at the facility had medical conditions that require veterinary attention.” USDA inspection of 12/07
- “At the time of the inspection, three dead dogs were found in enclosures on the premises. The owner stated that she was not aware that these dogs had died until our inspection. The dead, unidentified, female basset hound ‘Amy’ was extremely emaciated. Her ribcage, shoulder blades, and backbone were very prominent with almost all detail of the bone structure visible. The abdomen was extremely tucked and sunken in. The owner stated that ‘Amy’ had weaned her 10 pups approximately 1 month ago. The owner had not sought any veterinary care or advice concerning ‘Amy’. Two other unidentified dead white poodle or poodle mixes were discovered during the course of the inspection. These dogs were both very thin. One of the dogs had its head sticking out of the dog door to the sheltered portion of the enclosure and was frozen to the enclosure floor. The other dog was dead inside the shelter of its enclosure. No bedding or food were present in any of these dogs’ enclosures. The owner had not consulted the attending veterinarian concerning the health of these dogs.” USDA inspection of 12/07

Brandi Cheney, S & S Family Puppies, Huntsville MO

USDA licensed through July 2011 (43-B-0435), currently MDA state-licensed in 2010 (MDA license #: 397)

- “Outside this pen was noted a dead adult female boxer, covered with a feed sack, that had died the day before. This dog appeared very thin. Owner stated she had been treating this dog but no medical records were available.” USDA inspection of 6/04

Joseph Clapp, Clapp Kennels, Butler, MO

Not currently MDA licensed; previously licensed as CB-00700096; USDA license cancelled 10/29/2008

- “The kennel building has numerous instances of hair, dirt and grime accumulation. This needs to be cleaned up, especially since the licensee is fighting some type of infection that has led to significant mortality within the kennel. The filth and grime throughout the kennel do not satisfy generally accepted husbandry practices for commercial kennels.” MDA inspection of 7/10/2008

- “Several dogs show clinical symptoms of disease. The licensee needs to have the attending veterinarian visit the site, assess the health and welfare of all the animals, consult on animal health issues at the facility, and prescribe treatment methods. Two USDA veterinarians also took part in this inspection, and they pointed out several dogs that needed veterinary care.... The significant mortality described by the licensee should have prompted a site visit prior to this inspection. MDA inspection of 7/10/2008
- “The licensee admitted to diagnosing his dogs with a condition called “Show Dog Crud” and treating them with Gatorade and Cephalexin, with mixed results. He also stated that the attending veterinarian disagreed with the diagnosis and treatment. This is not adequate veterinary care!” MDA inspection of 7/10/2008

Beth Conley, Wee Paws Kennel, Salem MO

USDA license through May 2011 (43-A-2976), MDA licensed through 2010 (CB-2089)

- “In the whelping building, there is a pen with 2 puppies. One is sick and the other puppy is dead. The owner states that they have been sick for awhile and she has been treating them.” USDA inspection of 6/09

Charlene Fisher, Greentop MO

Not currently USDA licensed or MDA state-licensed (previous MDA #7850)

- “At this inspection, there was a wheel barrow full of green water that has dogs skeletal remains in the water. Owner states that this is one of the dogs that she had euthanized. She left it in wheelbarrow with lime and was going to bury it when weather permitted. The skeletal remains need to be buried in the next 24 hours.” MDA inspection of 8/09
- “At this inspection, there was a strong odor of something that was dead as we approach the gate to the facility. When asking the owner what the smell was, she stated she had a puppy that had died the night before. When questioning on how strong the odor was she said it had died two (2) days prior.” MDA inspection of 9/09

Paul and Pollie Gingerich, Gingerich Farms, Bogard MO

USDA license cancelled Aug. 2010 (43-A-3766), currently MDA state-licensed in 2010 (CB-5601)

- “An unweaned, female ‘yorkie-poo’ puppy, born 10-11-08, was not moving. Upon closer observation, the puppy had dry, crusty, yellow exudates around both eyes. There was also a thick, moist, yellow to brown colored exudate around the nose and muzzle. The gums were extremely pale and the hair coat was in poor condition. This puppy had not been seen by a veterinarian and at the time of inspection the licensee was verbally instructed to have the dog examined by a veterinarian as soon as possible. During the inspection, the licensee informed the inspectors that before a veterinarian could be found, the puppy had died.” USDA inspection of 11/08

Vicki Lasiter, Dogwood Kennel, Neosho MO

USDA licensed through Oct. 2010 (43-A-4683), MDA licensed through 2009 (CB-6045)

- “There was one female basset hound that had its head trapped between the shelter and the wire of the enclosure. This animal was very lethargic, stiff and non responsive. The animals had not been checked by the owner yet.” USDA inspection of 12/08

Jesse and Sonja Miller, Walnut Creek Kennel, La Monte MO

USDA license cancelled Sept. 2010 (43-A-5398),MDA licensed through 2010 (CB-700146)

- “The Program of Veterinary Care stated that the applicant would be euthanizing the dogs at the facility, by clubbing the dogs. In accordance with the report of the AVMA panel on euthanasia, this is not an acceptable method of routine euthanasia.” USDA inspection of 8/08

Mitchell Pendelton, Country Side Kennels, Iberia MO

USDA licensed through Nov. 2010 (43-A-3451), currently MDA state-licensed in 2010 (CB-4902)

- “A female poodle had two newborn puppies, 1 dead and 1 alive, in a frying pan being used as a feed bowl. Whelping females need to be isolated from other.” MDA inspection of 8/09

Edna and Joni Petersheim, Hillview Kennel, Moberly MO

USDA licensed through Feb. 2011 (43-A-4415),MDA licensed through 2010 (CB-6398)

- “There was a deceased puppy on the top of one of the pens in the interior of the main housing building. The licensee stated that he had found the puppy the night before and had removed it from the pen. The licensee stated that he usually removes dead animals immediately and disposes of them but that he must have forgotten to remove the puppy last night.” USDA inspection of 12/09

Cathy and Robin Pritchett, Bottomland Kennels, Rives MO

USDA license cancelled April 2008 (43-A-4848), not currently MDA state-licensed (previous MDA #4900)

- “Since the first part of December, 2007 this facility has incurred three mortalities that revealed through subsequent necropsies these animals were heartworm positive. The mortalities were attributed to the identified heartworm infestations and related complications. At least ten additional dogs have been tested following removal from the kennel with all dogs found to be positive for heartworms.” USDA inspection of 1/08

- “Appropriate treatment of an eye condition noted on the July 10, 2007 inspection of two adult chocolate Labrador retrievers was not taken. These dogs were observed in July with eyes that were milky and cloudy. The eyes appeared enlarged and dilated. The adult male of the pair was also noted as having extremely poor body condition. The dog’s body condition score on a 9 point scale would have been in the 2 to 3 ranking. Protrusions of several ribs, vertebra structure, and hips were easily noticeable. The owner was directed to consult with the attending veterinarian in regards to diagnosing the problems and implementing treatment. On 12/7/07 the female of this pair was still on site and in an enclosure with another female chocolate Labrador retriever. The female is still exhibiting enlarged, milky eyes. Upon questioning, the owner stated the male viewed on the last inspection had died shortly after that visit. No necropsy had been performed on this animal. He stated the attending veterinarian had viewed the female dog during an onsite visit during September. According to the owner the attending veterinarian had indicated that the condition could be due to leptospirosis. He stated further that no diagnostic measures had been taken. At this time this dog has received no treatment and the female she is currently housed with is exhibiting the same condition that has been described with cloudy eyes.” USDA inspection of 12/07
- “In the second concrete enclosure from the south end on the east side of the kennel an adult Labrador retriever was observed dead within the shelter. The owner stated the dog must have died sometime during the previous day. He stated that he had observed her with a distended abdomen before death. No treatment had been initiated. No diagnostic efforts have been taken at this point. The owner stated that within the last three months at least two other adult Labrador retrievers had died on premises.” USDA inspection of 12/07
- “During the inspection it was observed that two adult dogs had whelped within the last day in hutch units that were not provided with bedding, adequate wind/ rain breaks, or additional heat sources. Current outside temperatures were approximately 40 degrees F with temperatures during the previous days considerably lower. No measures had been taken to ensure appropriate shelter for newborn puppies. The four puppies observed were dead.” USDA inspection of 12/07

Bonnie and Herman Schindler, Teacher’s Pets, Mexico MO

USDA licensed through May 2011 (43-B-0091),MDA licensed through 2010 (DL-952)

- “There was a dead dog in the pen of Dalmatians. This dog was still there at the time of inspection, as workers had yet to get to this pen at the time of inspection, which was approximately 10:00 in a.m. To correct: all pens should be inspected for sick, injured, or any other problems with the dogs first thing in the a.m.” MDA inspection of 9/09
- “There was a pen of 4 Dalmatians, one of which had been killed. The male was being very possessive of this female. To correct: need to make sure dogs are compatible before housing them together.” MDA inspection of 9/09

Diane Swearingen, S & D Kennel, Aurora MO

USDA license cancelled Mar 2009 (43-A-1747), MDA state-licensed in 2009 (previous MDA # 1423)

- “There was a litter of one week old Wheaton Terrier puppies in outdoor housing. One puppy was found dead during the inspection. The licensee stated that the puppy had not been doing well the day before. She had not provided any treatment or supportive care to the puppy when she observed that it was failing. The heat lamps were off and unplugged. It is unknown if the heat lamps were on overnight or if the cold contributed to the puppy’s death. However, the licensee failed to provide any care to the puppy when she observed that it was not doing well the day before.” USDA inspection of 1/09

Kenny Tracy Jr, Tracy’s K & J Pets, Fair Grove, MO

USDA licensed cancelled April 2010 (43-B-3675), MDA state-licensed through 2009 (previous MDA #1474) -- believed to be out of business as of late 2009

- “A Pomeranian puppy was observed in the nebulizer. The puppy was motionless. Upon closer examination of the puppy – the gums were white, there was whitish matter around the puppy’s mouth, and it was unresponsive to external stimulus. Closer examination showed the puppy was deceased. The licensee, manager, and animal caretaker could not provide information regarding why the puppy was sick, the status of its treatment, and why that particular treatment approach was being used. No documentation was available on this puppy indicating that the attending vet had seen, diagnosed, or prescribed treatment.” “During a review of breeder acquisition and disposition records dated from April 17, 2009 through June 10, 2009, an approximately 2.7 percent mortality rate was calculated. There were approximately 1277 puppies purchased in this time frame and 46 are listed as deceased. These puppies are purchased by the licensee at 8 weeks of age or older. This seems to be a higher than normal mortality rate for a facility of this size and in the short o a time period for puppies that are over the age of 8 weeks and visually healthy at time of purchase.” USDA inspection of 6/09

Pat Yearns, P-C K-9 Krazy Kennel, Downing MO

Not currently MDA licensed; previously licensed as CB-4913; signed MDA stipulated settlement agreement 6/10/2009; USDA license cancelled 7/15/2009

- “There was a puppy that had died in the smokehouse (whelping house), the puppy was laying on the cold concrete, and the other puppies were climbed up on there mother’s legs to stay warm. Their bedding was damp and there was cold air coming in.” MDA inspection of 1/20/2005