

*A dead adult female boxer covered with a feed sack had died the day before. This dog appeared very thin. Owner stated she had been treating this dog but no medical records were available.*

*There were four dead dogs outside the front door of the trailer and one dead dog found during the inspection that [the breeder] did not know about.*

*Approximately 8 Schnauzers had matted hair over entire body. The hair is in large balls around the feet area. Hair on the body is either matted in balls or stuck down to the body.*

*There is a severe rodent problem throughout the facility. Mice are crawling along the pens on the inside of the whelping facility. Dead mice are in the outside runs where dogs and puppies are being kept. Mice droppings are throughout all enclosures. Mice are between metal panels of each pen on the inside of the whelping facility.*

*Three cocker spaniel puppies exhibited bloody vomit and stools while in transport. These animals were dropped off in a highway median.*

*A cocker has a tumor on her belly area. This tumor has opened up and is draining. The location of the tumor allows it to touch the ground and collect germs and any thing else that might be present.*

*A female Bichon was observed to be very lethargic and unresponsive. It was also observed that this dog had a tumor like growth on the dogs left side on the mammary gland. This was tumor like growth was observed to be open and enlarged.*

*The stump of the amputated paw of the yellow Labrador Retriever appeared enlarged and edematous.*

*White dog with clumps of mats all over; larger white dog has clumps of mats all over with fecal material around the anal area; shih-tzu is severely matted; westie is soiled and stained in the rear quarters; long haired dog has large rolls of mats over its entire body. All dogs need to be groomed, clipped, and have their nails trimmed regularly to prevent injury and disease.*

# USDA Standards?



This pamphlet provides highlights of the USDA Standards used to regulate commercial dog breeders licensed under the federal Animal Welfare Act.

The Animal Welfare Act was first passed in 1966 to regulate dealers supplying animals to federally funded research institutions. In 1970 the Act was amended to include dog breeders that used wholesale methods, such as brokers and pet stores, to sell their puppies.

Congress appointed the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to establish "minimum standards" of care that dog breeders must meet in order to obtain a license.

Many of these Standards were developed by those closely associated with the dog industry, and most are nearly 40 years old.

## TEMPERATURE EXTREMES

### What are the USDA Standards?



For dogs caged in barns or other outbuildings, USDA requires that the temperature be maintained at 50-85 degrees. While this may sound reasonable, the standards go on to say that if the temperature falls below 50 degrees, then the dogs must be provided with "bedding." If the temperature rises above 85 degrees, then simply turning on a single window fan in the building will keep the breeder in compliance with the standards.

USDA requires that small breeds, short haired breeds, old dogs, young dogs, and sick dogs, not be kept in outdoor cages unless they are "acclimated" to the temperature extremes. This in itself is an oxymoron, as the animal would first have to be exposed to excessive heat or cold in order to become acclimated, which would violate the Standards in order for a dog to become acclimated.

Dogs housed outdoors must be provided with bedding if the temperature falls below 50 degrees and "extra bedding" if the temperature falls below 35 degrees. In short, there are no upper or lower temperature restrictions for dogs being housed outdoors.



## DEALING WITH REPEAT OFFENDERS

### What are the USDA Standards?

As illustrated thus far, the Standards set forth by USDA do very little to protect the dogs. While many USDA licensed dog breeders do meet the Standards, annual USDA reports to Congress reveal that 48.5% of licensed facilities are substandard facilities, with 4.5% of those (roughly 180 breeding facilities) with very serious violations that impact the health and well being of the dogs.

It is important to note that violations of the standards and regulations of the Animal Welfare Act (as it pertains to dog breeders) are never criminal. The Standards state that serious repeat violators may face "adjudicatory and administrative proceedings." These proceedings take from 3-7 years before any action can be taken against the breeder, and then, the action is only fines, suspensions or revocations of licenses.

The most serious penalty against dog breeders, a revocation of their USDA license, will not stop the kennel owner from breeding dogs. USDA licenses are only needed when puppies are being wholesaled. In states that lack regulation over dog breeders, like Indiana, the breeder can continue breeding and selling puppies directly to the public

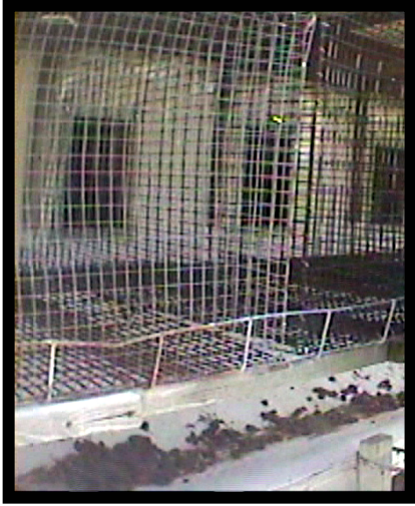


The following page includes excerpts from actual USDA inspection reports. In all cases, the breeder and/or broker was simply given a written violation on their inspection report. Even though the violations would constitute animal cruelty in most states, law enforcement was not notified. Administrative action was not taken against any of the breeders with the violations noted, and most are still in business today with similar, or even worse, violations on each and every inspection.

## HOUSEKEEPING

### What are the USDA Standards?

Housekeeping Standards developed by USDA addresses issues such as cleaning, sanitation, and pest control. One requirement is that excrement be removed daily. Since most kennels use open wire flooring, excrement falls through the wire to a "wash down" area below the cage. Most kennels hose this area down once a day.



With a typical building holding between 50 and 100 dogs, the amount of excrement that develops over a 24 hour period is very significant; the dogs must suffer through the next 24 hours of confinement in a building where the excrement will remain until the next day's cleaning.

Another requirement under USDA Standards is the cleaning of food and water dishes. Standards only require cleaning every 2 weeks. Most commercial dog breeders use automatic feeders and waterers, and the very design prevents effective means of sanitation. Even if the breeder were to disassemble the devices every 2 weeks, the accumulation of hair, dirt, debris, saliva and urine that builds up in that 2 week period is quite simply, **DISGUSTING!**



This photo was taken by a sheriff's deputy investigating a complaint on an Indiana puppy mill. The photo was obtained through an open records request. The kennel was given a "clean bill of health" by the deputy.

## CAGE SIZES

### What are the USDA Standards?



"Primary Enclosures" are the cages the dogs will live their entire lives. The size of the cage is determined by two things -- the dog's length and the dog's height.

The only height requirement is that the cage be 6 inches taller than the dog inside.

The required floor space is calculated by measuring the length of the dog (from nose to anus).

Using a bulldog measuring 24 inches long, the USDA formula for determining floor space is illustrated below.



$(24 + 6) \times (24 + 6) = 900$  sq in. This equates to a cage measuring 30 inches X 30 inches. This cage will be the "primary enclosure" for the bulldog -- the place it will live its entire life.

## EXERCISE REQUIREMENTS

### What are the USDA Standards?

USDA requires that dogs be given opportunity to exercise every day. Like most of the USDA Standards, there are exceptions to this requirement.

The Standards say that if a dog is provided with "two times the required floor space" then no additional exercise is required. Using the bulldog example on the previous page, this means the dog can spend its life in solitary confinement in a cage measuring just 3.5 foot X 3.5 foot.

Another exception to the exercise requirement makes the assumption that two or more dogs in the same cage will provide ample exercise through romping and playing together. As long as each dog in the cage has the minimum floor space, no additional exercise is required.



Using the same bulldog measurement of 24 inches in length, two bulldogs can be housed in a cage measuring 3.5 X 3.5 feet. Three dogs would require 4.3 X 4.3 feet. Four dogs would require a 5 X 5 foot cage. Up to 12 dogs can be housed in one cage -- 12 bulldogs would need a cage less than 9 X 9 feet.

The cage-size requirements themselves are what most people would consider inhumane, but the requirement for exercise makes a bad situation worse for the hundreds of thousands of dogs that live their lives in small wire cages.

## MOTHER DOGS AND THEIR PUPPIES

### What are the USDA Standards?

In a commercial breeding setting, most female dogs will be bred every six months. With a seven day breeding period, a nine week pregnancy, and an eight week nursing period, female dogs are either mating, pregnant, or nursing puppies for 32 weeks a year.

A special formula is used by USDA in order to calculate the amount of floor space a nursing mother dog and her puppies will need. In addition to the minimal space needed to house the mother dog, 5% of that space is required for each puppy. The Yellow Lab pictured below, and her nine puppies (which will triple in size before weaning) will require a cage smaller than the size of a twin size mattress.



All exercise requirements are set aside for nursing dogs and their puppies. Nursing mothers are confined to a cage with the puppies for eight weeks, with no requirement for exercise and no way to escape the demands of her puppies as they begin to grow. This results in malnutrition and complete and utter exhaustion for the mother dog.

In addition to the toll this cruel confinement takes on the mother dogs, the puppies will often suffer from life-long behavioral problems brought on from bad habits developed during cramped confinement throughout an 8-week period that trainers consider a critical learning period in young puppies' lives.