

The Horrible Hundred 2021 - Ohio

A sampling of problem puppy mills and puppy sellers in the United States

May 2021

This is a state-specific excerpt of the full Horrible Hundred report, which can be found at www.humanesociety.org/100pupmills.

For the ninth year in a row, the Humane Society of the United States is publishing a list of 100 problem puppy mills and dog sellers. The 2021 Horrible Hundred is a list of problem dealers in the United States that the HSUS is aware of, published annually to warn consumers about common problems at puppy mills, and to urge government oversight agencies, such as the United States Department of Agriculture, to live up to their enforcement obligations. It is not a list of the worst operations, because many puppy mills are not inspected at all and thus operate in secrecy.

Missouri continues to have the largest number of puppy mills in this report for the 9th year in a row (21), followed by Ohio (16), Iowa (11) and Nebraska and Pennsylvania (eight each). However, states with no dealers in this report are not necessarily doing better at preventing puppy mills. HSUS researchers are unable to get local inspection records from states that do not have kennel inspection laws or those that have suspended inspections during the pandemic. Some states, such as Minnesota, do not share kennel inspection records with the public at all, and some states, such as Oklahoma, that do have inspection laws have chosen to rarely enforce them. States that have transparent kennel inspection programs, or that do a better job of enforcement, often have more dealers in the report simply because more records of their violations are available.

Partly because of the scarcity of meaningful USDA inspections, the HSUS [sent undercover investigators](#) to visit and photograph puppy mills that the USDA has not recently inspected or has listed as compliant with the Animal Welfare Act regulations. We conducted these visits in July 2020 and again in March and April of 2021, photographing from the road. What we found was disturbing. In some cases, while the USDA did not cite certain breeders for any violations, our photographs showed dogs living in puppy mill-like conditions, confined to small, stacked wire cages, with scant shelter from the elements, and with no



James E. Miller was found with multiple issues at three different state inspections in 2020, including a cavalier with an eye issue. Photo by Ohio Dept. of Ag., 2020.

room to run or play. In some cases, our investigators filmed dogs circling repeatedly in their small cages, apparently psychologically distressed and deprived of adequate enrichment and human contact.

The period of time between our May 2020 Horrible Hundred report and our May 2021 report has been one of the most troubling in modern history. The global pandemic put many inspection programs on hold, yet the puppy-selling market was busier than ever in 2020 due to the increasing demand for new dogs from home-bound Americans. Deadly weather events in some parts of the country put more animals at risk than ever before, highlighting the need for large breeding operations to have safely constructed kennels as well as emergency plans, fire prevention and weather protections in place. But at the same time, pet stores were considered essential businesses in many areas, and the market for dogs was strong, according to [news sources](#). Now more than ever, dogs need our protection, and kennel laws should be strictly enforced to make sure animals are protected in the next disaster.



Ivan Weaver had numerous housing violations, including enclosures for the dogs that were damaged, poorly constructed or didn't have enough space, and open metal flooring that wasn't adequately coated, which is uncomfortable and dangerous for the dogs. Photo by Ohio Dept. of Ag., 2020.

The Horrible Hundred reports were never intended to be a list of all the puppy mills in the United States, or even a list of the worst puppy mills, since many of the worst puppy mills are never inspected at all. Instead, the report is a snapshot that depicts the breadth of the problem. With this snapshot, we hope to urge consumers and policy makers to do everything in their power to stop puppy mills.

For information on how to get a puppy from a responsible breeder, see humanesociety.org/puppy.

OHIO

[Ivan M. Barkman / Lone Pine Kennel, Baltic, Ohio: Failed state inspection for matted dog, dog with eye disorder; history of poor veterinary care and sick dogs \(repeat offender\)](#). State inspectors found several issues at Lone Pine Kennel during an August 2020 inspection, including a bichon with matted hair and a bichon who had been diagnosed with a cherry eye during a prior veterinary examination. “Cherry eye” is a disorder in which reddish tissue is protruding near the corner of the eye. The inspector wrote: “The kennel veterinarian recommended removal if the issue did not resolve. Owner treated the dog with

ointment, but tissue is still present.” In addition, the inspector noted that “a female dog was bred prior to having a physical examination by a veterinarian.” Ohio law requires that female dogs be examined by a veterinarian prior to breeding, to ensure they are healthy enough to breed and whelp puppies.

The issues found in August 2020 are a concern because Lone Pine Kennel was cited for many similar issues earlier that same year, and in years past. The kennel appeared in our 2020 Horrible Hundred report due to a January 2020 USDA inspection that showed Barkman had a repeat violation for a puppy who wasn’t getting adequate veterinary care. As we noted in that report, the USDA inspector “observed a female Pomeranian puppy ID# 5114 that was coughing and raspy sounding.” The report stated: “The licensee acquired the animal on 12/27/2019 from an individual that had previously treated the animal for an upper respiratory infection, but still appeared to have residual clinical signs. The licensee’s Program of Veterinarian Care specifically states that ‘if a puppy does not respond to the first choice of antibiotic then seek veterinary advice’ [but] prior to today’s inspection the licensee did not communicate the upper respiratory issue with his Attending Veterinarian.”

The violation for the sick puppy was listed as repeat violation, because the licensee had previously been warned about the need to obtain proper treatment for sick dogs. In Aug. 2019, Barkman received a direct violation for a dog with an obvious medical condition who was not receiving adequate treatment. According to that USDA report, a female bichon in the whelping kennel was shaking her head and “was noticed to have a clear/white discharge coming from her left ear. The discharge was draining down her face on that side becoming darker (red-brown) further away from the ear. The tissues inside the ear are swollen to a point that the ear canal is no longer visible. In addition, there was an odor coming from the ear.” The licensee admitted to the inspector that the dog had had the same problem since March 2019 when he purchased her, meaning she had been suffering for about five months, yet had not been taken to a veterinarian. The licensee said he was intermittently treating the dog with an ear mite killer, but there was no indication that his veterinarian had prescribed the treatment or that the dog was getting better, according to the USDA’s report. The inspector added: “The Attending Veterinarian was contacted and agreed that given the severity and duration of the issue that the dog should be examined. The Licensee is currently not using the methods he has available to prevent, control, diagnose or treat the health issues with this dog.” The kennel had 129 dogs and puppies at a February 2021 USDA inspection; that inspection was compliant. USDA #31-A-0519; OH #CB000Q0B. **REPEAT OFFENDER; SECOND TIME IN THIS REPORT.**

[Eli D. Hostetler, Holmesville, Ohio: State inspectors found a nursing mother golden retriever who was severely underweight and another who had “deep open wounds” in December 2020, plus other dogs in need of care; USDA inspectors have not cited the facility in years.](#) State records show that Ohio Department of Agriculture inspectors tried to inspect Eli Hostetler’s kennel in November 2020, but were not given access, which is concerning; state-licensed dog kennels are required to make facilities available for inspection during normal business hours, and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. When the ODA returned on Dec. 22, 2020, state inspectors found some very concerning issues. The most disturbing were two golden retrievers who were clearly in poor health. One was a nursing mother dog who was extremely underweight. The inspector wrote, “one female golden retriever ending in microchip #2946 that is nursing has a 1.5/9 BCS that is consistent with Nestle Purina body condition system chart.” The [Nestle Purina body condition chart](#) describes a dog with a 1.5 body type as “too thin.” Even a dog with a score of 2 has “ribs, lumbar vertebrae [and] pelvic bones easily visible” and “no palpable fat,” and a dog with a body score of 1 is emaciated with “no discernible body fat” and “all bony prominences evident from a distance,” and an “obvious loss of muscle mass,”

according to the Purina chart. A dog in such poor condition could also put her puppies at risk, as she might not have the strength to nurse or care for them.

During the same inspection, another female golden retriever had “deep open wounds that were pink, red, and white in color that were being treated as minor cuts per the licensee’s vet care plan.” The fact that the breeder was treating the wounds as minor when the inspector could see that they were deep was noted as a violation, and indicated the need for professional veterinary care. Other issues found at the same inspection included some dogs being kept outside in the cold without veterinary approval, and “multiple dogs with dental disease [who] require attention per the licensee’s veterinarian care plan and the dogs physical exam.”

Hostetler is also USDA licensed, but it appears the USDA has not cited him for any recent violations. OH #CB0016XF, USDA #31-A-0653.

[Daniel and James Miller / Happy Mountain K9 Facilities / Puppies R Us, Loudonville, Ohio: State inspectors found issues at six different visits, including two dogs with eye disorders; owners failed four inspections in a row for dogs exposed to winter weather without proper shelter when temperatures had been below freezing; seller offers puppies on PuppyFind.com \(repeat offender\).](#)

Ohio Department of Agriculture inspectors found issues at six different state inspections at Happy Mountain K9 in 2020, according to state records. First, state employees attempted to perform two inspections in October and November, but no one was available to let them in to view the kennel, which is concerning; state-licensed dog kennels are required to make facilities available for inspection during normal business hours, and interfering or refusing full access is a violation of state law. Inspectors later returned and gained access during four different visits in December 2020, and found violations every time. During a Dec. 14, 2020, inspection, the kennel was rated “non-compliant” for seven different issues, including “multiple outdoor housing areas which lacked one or more shelter structures accessible to each dog and puppy in the facility for protection from the natural elements.” That violation was of considerable concern because historical weather data shows that temperatures in that part of Ohio in December were frequently below freezing. Even in milder weather, dogs need protection from the rain and wind. Other issues found at the December 14 inspection included a Bernese mountain dog with “irritation and discharge from his eyes,” and a poodle “with red irritation and swelling to his eyes.” Inspectors also found the kennel “lacked enrichment within all enclosures,” and lacked some important records. State inspectors returned three different times before the end of December and found all three times that the lack of adequate outdoor shelters was still an issue. The repeated failure to provide something as basic as protection from the rain and snow shows a complete lack of concern for basic humane care on the part of Happy Mountain K9 Facilities.

The operation also appears to be offering [puppies for sale](#) on PuppyFind.com, an online site that the HSUS has repeatedly linked to puppy mills, unlicensed sellers and other questionable dealers. As of April 16, 2021, it appears the Millers are [linked to other business names](#) and Daniel A. Miller / Happy Mountain Canine has an F rating with the local Better Business Bureau, which has attached an alert to his account for “a pattern of complaint that is unusual for the size of the business.”

Happy Mountain K9 appeared in our 2019 Horrible Hundred report as well. As we noted in that report, Daniel and James Miller had two licenses in Ohio, both listed at the same address. One was under the name Happy Mountain Canine Facilities, and the other was under the licensee’s names only. During an inspection of the latter in August 2018, the Millers were found “noncompliant” by state inspectors due to “multiple puppies [who] were found to be sold less than 8 weeks of age,” an apparent violation of state law. The sale of underage puppies is a significant concern because underaged animals are especially

prone to illness, may not be fully weaned and don't have mature immune systems. Under the Happy Mountain Canine Facilities license number, state inspectors found violations in August 2018 for dogs who didn't have enough space in their enclosures and lack of a written health care plan provided by a veterinarian, including guidance on other issues such as behavior, exercise and procedures for dew claw removal and tail docking. Expired medications were also found at the facility. Authorities re-inspected the facility in September 2018 and found additional issues: Four outdoor enclosures had no shelter structures to protect the dogs, and veterinary health care plans were still missing.

Based on the repeat violations in 2020, it appears that the lack of adequate outdoor shelters may have been ongoing between 2018 and 2020, and it is unknown if it has been corrected in 2021. Former OH #CB0009Z7 (Happy Mountain) and CB0008M2. REPEAT OFFENDER; SECOND TIME IN THIS REPORT.

James E. Miller / Elite Puppies, Millersburg, Ohio: Multiple issues found at three different state inspections in 2020; dogs found in need of veterinary care included a cavalier with “discharge and red irritated tissue around the eye” and three dogs with dental disease; inspectors found unlawful medication not “consistent with state and federal law.” State inspectors found issues at four different visits to Elite Puppies in late 2020, records obtained by HSUS show. First, inspectors who arrived on Aug. 12, 2020, to conduct an inspection were not given access to the property, which is concerning because it leaves dogs unprotected and could indicate a licensee is avoiding an inspection. State-licensed dog kennels in Ohio are required to make facilities available for inspection during normal business hours, and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. On Sept. 2, inspectors returned and were given access, but noted a number of issues, including three dogs with grade three dental disease, and a cavalier spaniel “with discharge and red irritated tissue around the eye,” a condition likely to be painful. Inspectors also noted that three dogs were housed outdoors without veterinary approval, there was a lack of enrichment for the dogs, and “the licensee had medication not directed by the attending veterinarian and consistent with state and federal law,” among other issues. When the state inspectors returned again for a Sept. 8 inspection, they found that all the same violations still existed, and the cavalier still had not received any treatment from, or under the guidance of, a veterinarian. When the state inspectors returned once again on Sept. 10, 2020, some issues were corrected, but some veterinary concerns still had not been addressed. At a re-check on Sept. 21, the inspectors finally found that the issues had been resolved, however, it was weeks after they were first discovered. OH #CB001RTD.

Joseph A. Miller / Horseshoe Kennel, Millersburg, Ohio: Breeder admitted a dog died during do-it-yourself dental procedure; Miller failed at least four state inspections and one USDA inspection in 2020 for inadequate veterinary care. State inspectors found at least seven different violations, some of which took four different visits to Horseshoe Kennel in 2020 to be resolved, state documents show, and the facility also failed a USDA inspection earlier in the year. At least one of the dogs at Horseshoe Kennel died due to a careless and likely painful do-it-yourself procedure.

Many of the issues found by state inspectors were related to dogs who had been listed in veterinary examination records as needing a dental cleaning, which had not yet been done more than a month later, according to an inspection report dated July 23, 2020. When inspectors re-inspected on July 31, 2020, they found the dogs still had not had their dental treatment, and rated the kennel “non compliant” for the second inspection in a row. When the inspectors returned a third time, on Aug. 7, 2020, they found that instead of taking at least one of the dogs to a veterinarian to have the procedure performed by a trained professional, Joseph Miller had obtained “permission” from his veterinarian to perform a do-it-yourself procedure, which apparently resulted in the death of a female Yorkshire terrier (#143). The

inspection report notes: “Licensee stated that this dog died during her dental cleaning, and stated the dog seemed stressed when [restrained] and he could see there was root exposure. Licensee was using an ultrasonic scaler with permission from his veterinarian.” The horrific treatment and death of a dog with such advanced dental disease that the roots of her teeth were showing, and who apparently was not sedated or given adequate pain control to calm her down, should never have happened. Professional breeders are required to get professional veterinary care. The tragic incident highlights a need for the ODA to insist on a stronger interpretation of Ohio’s veterinary care rules to prevent animal suffering; invasive procedures should always be performed by veterinary professionals.

When state inspectors returned a fourth time, on Aug. 24, they found the kennel “non compliant” for the fourth time in a row for an issue with a cavalier who still had not been treated for dental disease. The report stated that the dog had “been bred” and indicated the procedure would be done after she raised puppies. There is no indication of whether the inspector insisted on the cavalier being treated by a professional veterinarian this time. The facility passed one state inspection in November 2020.

Horseshoe Kennel is also licensed by the USDA, which means it can sell to brokers, online or to pet stores all over the country. In March 2020, the USDA cited Miller with violations for a dog with a skin condition, using protocol and medications not recommended by a veterinarian (more self-administered “veterinary” care, it appears), and buildup of grime on some feeders. Joseph A. Miller had more than 50 dogs at that inspection. OH #CB0016CL, USDA #31-A-0789.

Joseph D. Miller, Millersburg, Ohio: Failed state inspection for illegal surgery on dog that was not performed by a veterinarian; another dog with injured leg, and unacceptable housing; USDA has not inspected in more than a year. State inspectors found violations or issues at Joseph D. Miller’s kennel during at least two different visits in 2020, state records show. On May 6, 2020, state inspectors attempted to perform an inspection at the kennel, but no one appeared to give them access to the property. Missed inspections are a violation because they could indicate a licensee was avoiding an inspection; licensees are required to make their kennels available for inspection during reasonable business hours. When inspectors followed up on May 13, 2020, Joseph D. Miller’s kennel was rated non-compliant for eight different violations, including a horrific violation related to a surgical procedure which was not performed by a veterinarian. Performing surgery on a dog without a veterinary license is not only specifically prohibited under the state Department of Agriculture rules, but also violates state law and is a misdemeanor in the second degree. The inspector wrote, “a surgical procedure was found to have been performed by someone other than a veterinarian. The severity of this violation was discussed in detail with the licensee. Because this violation cannot be corrected without another surgical procedure being performed, which may not be necessary, your violation has been documented but marked as corrected at this time. A repeat violation of this section at any time may result in ODA taking civil and/or criminal action against licensee per ORC 956.13.” There was no further explanation of what the procedure entailed or whether the breeder was ever charged for performing the apparently illegal surgery.

During the same inspection, a male dog was found “toe touching on his right hind leg,” which seemed to indicate that he was unable to put weight on the leg; the dog had not been examined by a veterinarian for the injury. Other issues found during the same inspection included at least one cage that was too small, dogs with nails that were too long and other issues related to inadequate housing and veterinary oversight. The kennel passed one inspection on May 15, 2020.

Miller also holds a USDA license, but, as of May 3, 2021, it appears that the USDA had not inspected Miller since August 2019. At that time, the facility had 186 dogs. The USDA cited Joseph D. Miller with a

veterinary violation in 2017 for a dog with an eye condition and two dogs with dental issues. OH #CB000UC6, USDA #31-A-0655.

[Levi Nisley, Patriot, Ohio: Breeder linked to three Petland stores was found with outdated veterinary records and a puppy with “red protruding tissue” coming from an eye; breeder was mentioned in consumer lawsuit against Petland regarding another sick puppy.](#) During a November 2020 inspection, state inspectors found several areas of concern at Levi Nisley’s kennel, a facility where additional issues had been found in years past. Inspectors noted “Upon inspection five whelping primary enclosures did not provide a floor of a grid density to preserve the dog’s normal mobility,” and that there was no record of a veterinary visit the prior year, nor a record of veterinary nutritional guidance, which are required under Ohio kennel laws. In addition, a “female puppy born 9/18/20 had red protruding tissue coming from the corner of its eye,” and it appears this puppy had not been examined or diagnosed by a veterinarian for the condition. Nisley was warned that the inspection was non-compliant and was notified: “Failure to correct the violation(s) outlined in this inspection report may result in ODA [Ohio Department of Agriculture] taking civil and/or criminal action against [the] licensee. Per ORC 956.13B states a person who is assessed a civil penalty under this section is liable for a civil penalty of not more than two thousand five hundred dollars for a first violation, not more than five thousand dollars for a second violation, and not more than ten thousand dollars for a third or subsequent violation. Each day that a violation continues constitutes a separate violation.”

In 2020, a cocker spaniel puppy named Luna who Nisley had sold to a Petland store in Summerville, South Carolina was diagnosed with pneumonia, mycoplasma and parasites, according to a [consumer lawsuit filed against Petland](#) in July 2020. The couple who purchased Luna “noticed that Luna was coughing and lethargic” shortly after they brought her home, according to the lawsuit (HSUS attorneys are assisting with the ongoing litigation). Luna was allegedly hospitalized for four days and required oxygen therapy and broad-spectrum antibiotics to survive. Levi Nisley also sold to at least one other Petland store in New York, according to a consumer complaint received by the HSUS, and to a Petland-owned store called Safari Stan’s in Connecticut, according to shipping documents the HSUS reviewed.

Had Petland and other pet stores looked into Nisley’s history before purchasing from him, they would have discovered that he had a prior history of animal care violations. For example, in April 2017, state inspectors cited Nisley for having undersized cages, and in September 2016, he was cited for lacking proof of physical examinations on dogs. During both of those inspections, he had hundreds of breeding dogs on site, and state records show he sold more than 700 puppies a year (2016). He was also cited in a 2015 state inspection for keeping dogs on wire floors that “bounced and sagged under the weight of the adult breeding dogs,” an issue which can keep dogs from moving around normally; the flooring issue echoes the one found in November 2020, and flies in the face of Petland’s claims that all of their breeders keep dogs in safe and comfortable housing.

Despite repeated issues found by state inspectors, as of May 2021 the USDA has not cited Nisley for any violations since 2014. The USDA documented 334 dogs on the premises during a March 2021 inspection. OH #CB000QRV, USDA #31-A-0446.

[Steven N. Sauder / Sandy Hill Kennel, Shiloh, Ohio: State inspectors found excessive excreta, dirt and grime, and lack of proper cleaning at facility previously found with a bleeding dog \(repeat offender\).](#) During a June 2020 inspection, state inspectors found nine violations at Sandy Hill Kennel, including violations for “multiple enclosures [that] lacked cleaning to remove excreta, dirt, grime or other waste,” “flooring on the outside run section of the kennel which lacked a protective coating,” the absence of “a storage area that protected medicines and other supplies from contamination;” “multiple hard surfaces which the dogs were coming in contact with lacked proper cleaning and disinfecting with a

cleaning solution safe for adult dogs or puppies;” “the licensee was not providing human interaction with the dog for at least fifteen minutes each day;” and a “Cavalier/Poodle mix Female [who] lacked proper grooming,” among other issues.

Sandy Hill Kennel was also listed in our 2019 Horrible Hundred report for a veterinary care issue, although its name did not appear in that report because the USDA was redacting kennel and breeder names at the time. It has since been linked to this breeder by address and license numbers. As we noted in that report, during a Dec. 18, 2018, USDA inspection, the inspector found a dog who was bleeding and had a pus-like fluid leaking from the vulva, and had not been treated by a vet. The inspection report states: “Dog [...] was noticed to have blood on her hind legs. Upon further examination, there was blood and a thick yellow/green discharge noticed coming from her vulva. The Licensee stated that he had noticed this periodically since she whelped her puppies on 12/3/2018 however; he had not contacted or consulted with his veterinarian.” Shockingly, the USDA did not cite the issue as a “direct” violation, which would have triggered faster follow-up by the agency. As we noted in that report, the USDA’s failure to require the breeder to immediately take the bleeding dog to the veterinarian could have put the dog’s life in danger. The USDA’s shocking lack of urgency in this case highlights its recent trend toward weaker enforcement as it focused on “educating” breeders rather than protecting dogs — an issue that we hope the agency’s new leadership will help address.

The 2018 report also noted dirty conditions, with “an excessive accumulation of hair, feces, food waste and other organic material built up under [many of] the enclosures,” and noted that the facility also had a noticeable odor that the inspector believed was linked to the dirty conditions. At the time of the inspection, there were almost 90 dogs and puppies on the property.

In February 2021, the USDA gave Sauder a “teachable moment” for missing information on the facility’s program of veterinary care related to animal grooming and hygiene, which is a concern due to the other issues found at Sandy Hill Kennel. OH #CB0016QV, USDA #31-A-0631. **REPEAT OFFENDER; SECOND TIME IN THIS REPORT.**

[Lena and Michael Troyer / Spring Side Kennel, Baltic, Ohio: USDA violation for unsanitary conditions, “platforms are covered with frozen urine and feces;” prior issues with veterinary care \(repeat offender\).](#) During a February 2021 USDA inspection, the Troyer kennel was cited for unsanitary conditions, with inspectors noting, “[some] areas are packed over with soiled snow, and the elevated platforms are covered with frozen urine and feces. Soiled areas do not allow the dogs to use the full space without becoming contaminated with urine and feces, as well as presenting a risk for disease transmission.” There were more than 75 dogs and puppies on the premises at the time of the 2021 inspection.

The kennel had violations on its state inspection report as well; in May 2020, state inspectors cited it for an expired medication and two records violations.

USDA and state inspectors found issues at the kennel in prior years as well. As we noted in our 2020 report, during an October 2019 state inspection, Michael L. Troyer was cited for several violations, including a pug with an eye disorder and a failure to document where his breeding animals came from. In addition, the licensee was instructed to take seven dogs who needed dental care to a veterinarian. But according to a November follow-up inspection report, instead of taking the animals to a vet for professional care, Troyer took them to another licensee, Ervin L. Raber. The inspector wrote, “All dogs had previous dentals by an outside source (Ervin L. Raber) and did not follow the licensee’s veterinary protocol [that required] all grade three and four dental disease being corrected by the attending

veterinarian.” The November inspection was also rated “non compliant” due to the licensee’s failure to have a veterinary professional treat the dogs; it was noted that he later complied.

In July 2019, USDA inspectors found inadequate housing and grubby food containers at Spring Side Kennel, and in May 2019, a Yorkie was found with such advanced dental tartar that the shape of his teeth was no longer visible. The inspector wrote, “During the inspection a 3 year old male Yorkie (#20, known as “Tommy”) was observed to have an excessive buildup of brown tartar [had] encased multiple teeth and obstructed the view of the normal shapes of the teeth in addition to receding gum lines. The teeth had not been observed by the licensee and the attending veterinarian had not been contacted for any treatment...”

The Troyers’ kennel appeared in our 2020 Horrible Hundred report under its old USDA license, which was under Michael L Troyer; recently, the licensees cancelled the former USDA license, and the business is now licensed under Lena Troyer with a new USDA number, but the same address. The state kennel license is still under Michael Troyer’s name but bears the same address.

Former USDA #31-A-0377 (under Michael Troyer; cancelled in 2020); Current USDA #31-A-0796 (under Lena Troyer); OH #CB001RY3. REPEAT OFFENDER; SECOND TIME IN THIS REPORT.

[Wayne R. Troyer, Sugarcreek, Ohio: Breeder formerly accused of shooting a dog in the head in 2009 had 2020 violations for wire flooring, not making facility available for inspection \(repeat offender\).](#)

On Aug. 6, 2020, Ohio Department of Agriculture inspectors arrived to conduct an inspection at Wayne Troyer’s kennel, but were unable to get access, either because someone was not there or would not let them in. The issue is a concern because licensed dog breeding facilities in Ohio are required to let inspectors in during regular business hours and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. Failure to make a kennel available for inspection could indicate a licensee is concealing poor conditions. When inspectors returned several days later, state records show they found an issue with disease control protocols as well as a violation for “two primary enclosures [that] did not provide a flooring with a grid density to preserve the dog’s normal mobility and muscle tone.”

While the violations found in 2020 were not numerous, they are of concern because of especially egregious violations that were linked to Wayne Troyer in the past. As we noted in our 2014 report, USDA inspectors found a dying, unmoving puppy at Troyer’s kennel in July 2013, and reported after a follow-up visit that the puppy had been euthanized. And as we reported in our 2013 Horrible Hundred report, Troyer also admitted to shooting a dog in the head under his prior license number (#31-A-0248). Under that license number, a breeder with the same name and address racked up a horrific list of Animal Welfare Act violations for neglecting to provide proper medical care to his dogs, and this included shooting a dog named Judy.

During a May 2009 inspection, a USDA inspector documented a “female brown and white dog (tag #7) named ‘Judy’” who appeared to have eye problems and needed to be seen by a veterinarian. When the inspectors came back to follow up on the dog about 6 weeks later, the inspector reported that the licensee’s wife told him they had “got rid of the dog.” When pressed for details, she admitted Troyer had killed Judy by shooting her in the head. Troyer later explained he had done so in order to “save the cost of veterinary attention.” According to the report, Troyer told the inspector that he had previously noticed Judy’s condition, but had wanted to “get one more litter out of the dog” before he “took care of” her. In an April 2010 settlement agreement, the USDA fined Troyer \$500 for shooting Judy.

Despite his grisly past, USDA records show Wayne Troyer hasn't been federally inspected since October 2019. At that time, he had 58 dogs. OH #CB001CR3, USDA #31-A-0391. **REPEAT OFFENDER; THIRD TIME IN THIS REPORT.**

Ivan D. Weaver, Fredericksburg, Ohio: Failed at least two state inspections in December 2020 for more than 15 violations; repeat violations for dogs kept in dangerous, small and defective housing.

Ohio inspectors found problems during three different visits to Ivan Weaver's kennel in 2020, state records show. On Nov. 24, 2020, they attempted to perform an inspection, but no one appeared to give them access to the property, which is concerning; state-licensed dog kennels are required to make facilities available for inspection during normal business hours, and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. When inspectors returned again on Dec. 3, 2020, they found 17 different non-compliant issues, including enclosures for the dogs that were damaged, poorly constructed or didn't have enough space, and open metal flooring that wasn't adequately coated, which is uncomfortable and dangerous for the dogs and is not permitted under state law; some of the flooring was so unstable that it "bounced and bent under the weight of the dogs." Inspectors also noted that Weaver was lacking complete health records on the dogs, and "lacked proof of a dental performed by a veterinarian" for seven different dogs. Weaver had also "bred females before [they had been] declared healthy following a physical examination," among other issues. The inspectors claimed that Weaver "corrected" some of the issues "during the inspection," but when they returned again on Dec. 11, they found 12 repeated issues, and rated the kennel "non-compliant" again. Some of the dogs still needed dental treatment, some of the housing was still unacceptable, and some of the dog enclosures still lacked adequate spacing and still had open metal flooring or unstable flooring. As of April 1, 2021, HSUS researchers were not able to obtain any inspection records from 2021 showing whether the issues were corrected. OH #CB001D64.

Andy E. Yoder / Backroad Kennel, Millersburg, Ohio: State inspectors found a dog with scabs and two others in need of care in September 2020; breeder has a history of injured dogs; issues stretch back to 2014 when USDA inspectors found a dog with an embedded collar and seven dead puppies (repeat offender). State records show that Ohio Department of Agriculture inspectors tried to inspect Andy E. Yoder's Backroad Kennel in August 2020, but were not given access, which is concerning; state-licensed dog kennels are required to make facilities available for inspection during normal business hours, and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. When the ODA returned again in September 2020, they rated the kennel "compliant" even though several notable concerns were found, including: "a West Highland Terrier female # 223491 was in need of a grooming," "a Scottish Terrier # 93894 had scabs on skin and tips of ear," and "a [Shih] Tzu # 7944 that was found to be in need of a dental to be performed by a veterinarian." The inspector wrote that the licensee "corrected" the issues during the inspection, which doesn't seem plausible, although he may have applied some treatments or made some veterinary appointments during the inspection to avoid getting a non-compliant inspection.

The issues at Backroad Kennel are a concern because of a pattern of past issues with animal care. Backroad Kennel was in our prior Horrible Hundred reports in 2015 and 2016. Andy Yoder appeared in the 2015 report for a number of severe violations of the Animal Welfare Act, including seven dead puppies found on his property, and a dog with a severely embedded chain collar. In April 2015, the USDA issued an official citation and notice of penalty (\$7,714) to Yoder for the dog with the embedded collar and several other animals found in need of veterinary care. He was also cited for repeatedly failing to make his property available for inspection. Despite this warning, Yoder again failed to grant access to inspectors during an attempted inspection in November 2015. But Ohio state inspectors were able to

access the property on Nov. 30, 2015, at which time they found a Scottish terrier puppy with an obvious open wound on the top of the puppy's head; inspectors ordered the licensee to have the puppy treated by a vet.

Andy E. Yoder's USDA license (#31-A-0396) was cancelled in March 2016, and it is unknown if he is still state-licensed. But it appears that Yoder is linked to a new USDA license, #31-A-0569, which is at the same address. The new USDA license is under the name of Betty Yoder, Horizon Puppies. That facility had a 2019 violation for not giving access to inspectors. At its last USDA inspection in March 2020, the property had an astonishing 286 dogs, but no documented violations. As of May 2021, it appears the USDA has not visited in more than a year. **REPEAT OFFENDER, THIRD TIME IN THIS REPORT.**

Jonathan J. Yoder, Millersburg, Ohio: Inspectors found an underweight nursing mother dog, unacceptable flooring; some dogs with questionable origins. On June 22, 2020, state inspectors attempted to perform an inspection at Jonathan Yoder's kennel, but no one appeared to give them access to the property. This was noted as a concern because it could indicate a licensee was avoiding an inspection; licensees are required to make their kennels available for inspection by Ohio Department of Agriculture inspectors during reasonable business hours and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. When inspectors returned again the next day, they found that some of the dogs' flooring was not acceptable, and they also found a mother dog who was nursing puppies and who appeared to be underweight. Inspectors wrote, "female ending in microchip #2405 that is nursing has a 2/5 BCS that is consistent with the AAHA BCS chart." The AAHA chart [is a chart](#) created by the American Animal Hospital Association that rates body scores in dogs from emaciated to obese. A dog scored a 2 out of 5 would be described as follows, per the chart: "ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist."

State inspectors also noted that the "Facility records lacked how, where and when some adult dogs were obtained," which could indicate that some of the dogs came from other, possibly unlicensed breeders, and could make disease tracking difficult. The operation passed a follow-up inspection later in the month. It is not USDA licensed. OH #CB002BTW.

Joseph M. Yoder, Fredericksburg, Ohio: Failed two consecutive state inspections in December 2020; some dogs did not have clean, drinkable water; two dogs in need of dental treatment; excessive feces (repeat offender). State inspectors noted problems at Joseph M. Yoder's kennel at least three times during late 2020. In November 2020, they attempted to perform an inspection at the kennel, but no one appeared to give them access to the property. Missed inspections are a concern because they could indicate a licensee was avoiding an inspection; licensees are required to make their kennels available for inspection during reasonable business hours and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. When inspectors returned on Dec. 17, 2020, they found half a dozen non-compliances, including some dogs who did not have drinkable water: "the licensee had outside enclosures which did not offer access to clean potable water." Other issues included an "outdoor enclosure with a structure that did not allow six inches of space above the head of the tallest dog in a normal standing position," an "accumulation of waste under the outside sheltered runs," and two dogs who needed a dental to be performed by a veterinarian. The licensee moved to correct some of the issues during the inspection, and called his veterinarian to allegedly make appointments for the dentals. But when the state returned to re-inspect on Dec. 29, the dental issue still had not been corrected.

The issues at Joseph M. Yoder's facility are of particular concern because of his past history. He appeared in two of our prior Horrible Hundred reports (2018, 2019). As we noted in our 2019 report, in June 2018, Ohio state inspectors cited Joseph M. Yoder's kennel for a number of violations, including an

accumulation of feces under the outside kennel runs; a dog pen with no housing structure in it to protect dog(s) inside it from the weather; dirty whelping pens; “evidence of flies and mice” in the kennel; “opened food storage containers” with holes in them; multiple expired medications present; inadequate records on puppies; and puppy sale records that indicated “multiple puppies were sold under 8 weeks of age,” an apparent violation of state law. When state inspectors returned for a re-inspection about a week later, the cleaning and housekeeping issues had been corrected, but state inspectors still found incomplete records on the puppies, as well as an ongoing issue with possible underage puppy sales. OH #CB0001QN. REPEAT OFFENDER, THIRD TIME IN THIS REPORT.

Norman E. Yoder / Green Meadow Farm, Apple Creek, Ohio: State inspectors found multiple dogs with raw, reddened, open sores, and other veterinary concerns; breeder performed do-it-yourself dentals against veterinary advice (repeat offender). Even after Norman Yoder’s Green Meadow Farm appeared in our May 2020 Horrible Hundred report due to some dogs who were not getting adequate veterinary care, state inspectors found at least twelve more dogs in need of veterinary care or grooming in September 2020. These included three dogs with red, raw sores, a dog with an eye disorder, three matted dogs, and five dogs who had been identified as needing dental cleaning by a veterinarian, but on whom the licensee had performed do-it-yourself procedures instead. The latter is extremely concerning because it could indicate procedures may not have been performed safely or humanely, and there is no indication that dogs were given pain medication or antibiotics, since the ad hoc procedures were not performed by a professional according to state rules. The September state inspection also found a dam and her puppies on dangerous gridded flooring, in violation of the state’s rules.

Inspectors took photos of several of the issues, including the three dogs with “sores.” The sores were all on the dogs’ heads and were bright pink and red. In one case, a dog had two head “sores” that appeared very swollen, and another dog had a sore behind the ear that exposed a large patch of raw skin with crusting around the edges. The bright red open wounds were very easy to spot and should have been immediately identified and treated.

Issues that were noted in our prior Horrible Hundred report included violations in 2019 for short-haired breeds being housed outside without veterinary approval, excessive food waste and flies around the dogs’ enclosures, a sharp point in the housing that could injure dogs, lack of emergency and nutrition plans, multiple dogs in need of grooming, and a male poodle who “was found to have a sore on his paw that needs to be treated under veterinary guidance.” In addition, one female dog had an unspecified issue that the licensee was supposed to follow up with his veterinarian about, and that had not been done, among other concerns.

In addition to his state license, the breeder also holds a license with the USDA. USDA inspectors had visited the property in May 2019, but did not record any violations, and as of May 6, 2021, it appears USDA has not been back since. The breeder had more than 150 dogs at that time, USDA records show. OH #CB001D2C, USDA #31-A-0705. REPEAT OFFENDER; SECOND TIME IN THIS REPORT.

David J. Yutzy, Millersburg, Ohio: Several dogs had eye disorders—one had “protruding tissue in both eyes;” two others had watery or cloudy eyes; a fourth dog had “severe” dental issues; state inspectors found poor shelter and excessive feces. On Aug. 31, 2020, state inspectors attempted to perform an inspection at David Yutzy’s kennel, but no one appeared to give them access to the property. Missed inspections are a concern because they could indicate a licensee was avoiding inspectors; licensees are required to make their kennels available for inspection during reasonable business hours and interfering or refusing full access would be a violation of state law. When state inspectors returned on Sept. 10, they rated the kennel “non compliant” for 16 different violations, the state inspection report

shows. The issues, many of which were photographed by state inspectors, included “fecal waste [that was] not being removed from in or under some of the enclosures on a daily basis,” and four different dogs with signs of poor health, including a male dachshund who “was found to have “severe tarter/dental disease,” a female French bulldog with a “watery left eye,” a female cavalier with a “cloudy left eye,” and a male dachshund with “protruding tissue in both eyes.” In addition, there were some cages that were stacked or lacked a solid resting surface, which are not permissible under Ohio’s kennel law, and some outdoor enclosures that did not provide enough shelter for each dog and puppy to get out of the sun, wind or rain. OH #CB00D1N.

METHODOLOGY

It is not possible to list all of the problematic puppy mills in the country in a single report. Due to the patchwork of laws across the U.S., spotty enforcement, and 2020-2021 COVID-19 restrictions in many areas, many puppy mills are not licensed or regulated, and very little information on them is available to the public. We selected the facilities listed in this report to demonstrate common problems and conditions at puppy mills and puppy mill transporters/brokers across the United States. The sellers listed in this year’s report were selected based upon a number of factors, which included, but were not limited to:

- The availability of state kennel inspection reports showing violations, or related documents received via public records requests.
- The availability of federal (USDA) kennel inspection reports showing violations, “teachable moments” or related documents received via public records requests.
- Federal, state or county warnings or fines, if available.
- The quantity of violations found on state or federal inspection reports and/or the severity of violations, especially those affecting animal safety and health, and how recently the violations occurred.
- Whether a seller appears to be providing misleading or potentially fraudulent information to puppy buyers.
- Whether a facility’s violations or other issues seemed newsworthy and of interest to the public.
- Whether the dealer was listed in one of the HSUS’s prior reports and has continued to accumulate violations since then.
- The availability of consumer complaints, investigation reports, photographs or news articles, or undercover photographs and video taken by HSUS investigators; and
- Indications that the facility appeared to be in business or in possession of an active license at the time of publication.

The large number of listings in certain states in this report is at least partly due to the greater availability of records in some states. Some states that do not inspect puppy mills at all, or that suspended their inspections due to the COVID-19-19 pandemic, have scant information available.

If a breeding facility is not listed in this report, it may be due to a lack of available records and/or a lack of information or space, not necessarily a lack of significant problems. Some puppy mills were not listed because they are under active investigation or litigation.

Some brokers (re-sellers) and transporters were included because many brokers are also breeders or support the industry by buying from puppy mills.

Throughout the report, the notation “**Repeat Offender**” means that the facility or operator has appeared in one or more prior HSUS puppy mills reports, including Missouri’s Dirty Dozen (2010);

Update Report: Missouri's Dirty Dozen (2011), The Horrible Hundred (2013, 2015, 2016 2017, 2018, 2019 and/or 2020) and/or 101 Puppy Mills (2014).

DEFINITION OF A PUPPY MILL

A [puppy mill](#) is a dog breeding operation, offering dogs for monetary compensation, in which the physical, psychological and/or behavioral needs of all or some of the dogs are not being consistently fulfilled due to inadequate housing, shelter, staffing, nutrition, socialization, sanitation, exercise, veterinary care and/or inappropriate breeding.

BUYER BEWARE

Individuals who have purchased a sick puppy whom they believe may have come from a puppy mill may file a report with the USDA using their [online form](#) and to the Humane Society of the United States at humanesociety.org/puppycomplaint. Buyers of sick puppies may also consider filing a complaint with the breeder's state department of agriculture and/or their state attorney general or consumer protection division.

Potential puppy buyers who witness suspected animal cruelty at a dog breeding operation should report it to the breeder's local animal control agency or local humane organization. If no such agency exists, report details to the local police or sheriff's department. For additional help, submit a complaint with HSUS at humanesociety.org/reportapupmymill.