



FACT SHEET: Greyhound Racing in the United States

GREYHOUND RACING: CRUEL AND INHUMANE

Greyhound racing is cruel and inhumane.

At commercial racetracks, thousands of greyhounds live confined in small cages barely large enough for them to stand up or turn around for long hours each day. Many are seriously injured while racing, and thousands are killed each year when they can no longer compete. Dog racing is cruel and inhumane, and should be outlawed.

Greyhound racing goes against the values of our community.

Dogs play an important role in our lives and deserve to be protected from individuals and industries that would do them harm. Racing greyhounds are treated in a way that we would not treat our own dog.

GREYHOUNDS ENDURE LIVES OF TERRIBLE CONFINEMENT

Dogs endure lives of terrible confinement.

At commercial racetracks across the country, tens of thousands of greyhounds endure lives of terrible confinement, inside stacked cages in warehouse-style kennels.ⁱ

In these kennels, dogs are confined in small cages barely large enough for them to stand up or turn around for twenty or more hours per day. This is no way to treat a dog.



GREYHOUNDS SUFFER SERIOUS INJURIES

Every year, thousands of greyhounds are seriously injured.

Because several states do not keep adequate records, there are no official national statistics on the number of dogs injured each year while racing. However, based on the records that are available we can safely estimate that thousands of dogs are seriously injured each year nationwide. For example, between 2002 and 2008, more than eight hundred dogs were injured while racing in Massachusetts.ⁱⁱ In New Hampshire, nearly 1,200 greyhound injuries were reported between 2005 and 2008.ⁱⁱⁱ In Arizona, the Department of Racing reports nearly 600 greyhounds injured in 2008.^{iv}

Injuries include broken legs, paralysis and death from cardiac arrest.

The most common greyhound injuries are broken legs. Other reported injuries include cardiac arrest, spontaneous seizures, sudden collapse before or after racing, spinal cord paralysis, severed tails, lacerated eyes, and puncture wounds.^v

OTHER ISSUES

Dogs are fed substandard meat to reduce costs.

To reduce costs, dogs at commercial racetracks are fed meat from downed and diseased animals that has been deemed unfit for human consumption.^{vi} Because this meat is fed to greyhounds raw, it can cause dogs to be exposed to deadly pathogens such as E. coli. This meat contains denatured charcoal to discourage human use.

Thousands of dogs are killed every year when they are no longer profitable.

Thousands of greyhounds are still killed every year. Because several states do not keep adequate public records, there are no verifiable statistics on the number of dogs killed nationally. Estimates range from 3,000^{vii} to 8,567.^{viii}

Greyhounds race in extreme weather conditions.

Across the country, dogs race on the hottest days of summer and the coldest days of winter.

Greyhounds have recently died from a mysterious illness.

In one month in 2005, 19 dogs at Wonderland Greyhound Park died from a mysterious illness that was later proven to be a form of horse flu that had never before jumped species.^{ix}

Greyhounds are sometimes transported in a dangerous manner.

Because dogs typically race at several racetracks during their racing career, professional haulers transport large numbers of dogs from one racetrack to another. During this process, dogs are usually transported in cramped conditions, and in some cases undergo cross-country trips in unventilated, aluminum trailers or rental vans.

In recent years, there have been several media-documented cases of racing dogs dying while being transported. For example, in August 2008 three dogs died while being transported from Iowa to Florida.^x

Greyhounds sometimes test positive for serious drugs, like steroids and cocaine.

In 2002, authorities from the Wisconsin Department of Justice investigated allegations that a greyhound trainer was receiving anabolic steroids by mail. After placing an undercover surveillance camera in the kennel where the trainer worked, authorities caught him injecting at least 11 dogs with a foreign substance over a two-day period.^{xi}

In a separate case, 119 dogs tested positive for cocaine at Florida racetracks between 2001 and 2003.^{xii}

Unprofitable greyhounds are sometimes sold to research laboratories, where they undergo invasive procedures.

In April 2000, a Wisconsin man was caught selling more than 1,000 former racing dogs to Guidant Corporation research laboratories, where they were used to test pacemakers before being killed.^{xiii}

Racing dogs are sometimes trained with live animals, such as rabbits.

In 2002 a greyhound breeder and owner had his state racing license temporarily suspended after he was caught using domestic rabbits to train his dogs. At least 180 rabbits were found at his kennel in rural Arizona.^{xiv}

GREYHOUND RACING: QUICK FACTS

How many dogs are required to operate a commercial racetrack?

On average, a population of 1,000 dogs is required to operate a commercial racetrack.

How many dogs are bred for racing each year, and how many of these dogs actually make it to the racetrack?

In 2006, 24,567 dogs were bred as potential racers.^{xv} The same year, 22,951 dogs were individually registered to race at 14 – 17 months of age.^{xvi}

How many dog tracks are currently operating in the United States?

There are currently 29 operational dog tracks in 9 states. Since December 2004, sixteen dog tracks have closed or ceased live racing. Two additional greyhound racetracks are scheduled to close in Massachusetts on January 1, 2010.

How many states allow dog racing?

Commercial dog racing is *per se* illegal in 35 states. In six other states, all dog tracks have closed but no prohibition has passed into law.

Which are the most recent states to ban dog racing?

Maine (1993), Virginia (1995), Vermont (1995), Idaho (1996), Washington (1996), Nevada (1997), North Carolina (1998), Pennsylvania (2004) and Massachusetts (2008, effective 2010) are the most recent states to make dog racing illegal.

Do dogs typically spend their entire racing careers at the same track?

Generally, dogs compete at several tracks, in multiple states, during their careers.

How many greyhounds are adopted into loving homes each year?

The exact number of greyhounds adopted into loving homes each year is not known, and estimates vary from 14,800^{xvii} to 18,000^{xviii}. What is certain is that not all dogs are adopted, and thousands are killed each year when they are no longer profitable as racers.

JOIN THE TEAM: HELP END THE CRUELTY OF DOG RACING

Help a dog and make a new friend by adopting a rescued greyhound.

To learn more about adopting a greyhound and to find a local adoption organization in your area, visit our online adoption directory at www.grey2kusa.org.



Support GREY2K USA and our national campaigns.

GREY2K USA is a national, non-profit greyhound protection organization with supporters in all 50 U.S. states. Our volunteers come from all walks of life: business people, lawyers, construction workers, artists, animal shelter workers, and others.

To end greyhound racing, it will take the support of everyone who cares about dogs. To date, volunteers nationwide have contributed their time, money, and talents to help end this cruelty. To find out how you can help, visit us online at www.grey2kusa.org or call 866-2GREY2K.

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- ⁱ Photographic evidence and correspondence from Wonderland Greyhound Park, the Massachusetts State Racing Commission, and the New Hampshire Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission, 2006-2008
- ⁱⁱ Massachusetts State Racing Commission, Greyhound Injury Records, 2002-2008
- ⁱⁱⁱ New Hampshire Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission, Greyhound Injury Reports, 2005-2008
- ^{iv} Arizona Department of Racing, Greyhound Injury Reports and Suspension Lists, 2008
- ^v Massachusetts State Racing Commission, Greyhound Injury Records, 2002-2008
- ^{vi} Linda L. Blythe, DVM, PhD, James R. Gannon, BVSc, FACVSc, A. Morrie Craig, PhD, *Care of the Racing Greyhound*, 119
- ^{vii} National Greyhound Association, *KABC Channel 7 ABC TV*, February 20, 2009
- ^{viii} *Greyhound Network News* and the Greyhound Protection League, U.S. Greyhound Racing Fact Sheet, April 2007
- ^{ix} Massachusetts State Racing Commission
- ^x Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering Investigative Report, January 8, 2009
- ^{xi} Wisconsin Department of Administration, Investigative Summary Case #302005 (Amended), May 22, 2002; *Associated Press*, September 19, 2002
- ^{xii} *Tampa Tribune/Alan Snel*, May 3, 2004
- ^{xiii} *Greyhound Network News*, Summer 2000
- ^{xiv} *Arizona Republic/Mary Jo Pitzl*, October 16, 2002
- ^{xv} National Greyhound Association
- ^{xvi} National Greyhound Association/*The Greyhound Review*, February 2004
- ^{xvii} *Greyhound Network News* and the Greyhound Protection League, U.S. Greyhound Racing Fact Sheet, April 2007
- ^{xviii} National Greyhound Association