



Animal Cruelty and Dogfighting National Statistics

Florida: A High-Risk State for Animals

Pet-Abuse.com's 2008 yearly report identifies Florida among the highest-ranking states involving animal cruelty cases. In fact, Florida is the number one state in the U.S. for many of the most severe animal crimes, including:

- Of 204 dogfighting cases under investigation, Florida tied with California for the most
- Out of 727 cases involving neglect and abandonment of animals, the state again ranked number one in the U.S.
- Out of 130 dog beating cases, Florida again came in first
- Florida also ranked the highest for animal drowning, choking and suffocation

Making The Connection: Animal Violence Linked to Human Violence

The connection between animal abuse and domestic abuse is well-known and well-studied. The FBI has recognized the connection since the 1970s, when its analysis of the lives of serial killers suggested that most had killed or tortured animals as children. Other research has shown consistent patterns of animal cruelty among perpetrators of other forms of violence, including child abuse, spouse abuse and elder abuse.

An examination of government data measuring intimate partner violence and studies of the prevalence of animal cruelty in such cases reveal staggering numbers of animals victimized by abusive partners each year.

- The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) estimates that nearly 1 million animals a year are abused or killed in connection with domestic violence
- Animal abusers are five times more likely to commit violent crimes against people and four times more likely to commit property crimes than individuals without a history of animal abuse
- Up to 75 percent of domestic violence victims report that their partners threatened or killed family pets
- A survey of the 50 largest U.S. shelters for battered women found that 85 percent of women and 63 percent of children entering shelters discussed incidents of pet abuse in the family
- Children living in an abusive home regularly turn to animal abuse and later in life, human abuse. In fact, 32 percent of pet-owning victims of domestic abuse reported that their child had hurt or killed a pet.



Dogfighting Is A Felony

Dogfighting is a “contest” in which two dogs—bred, conditioned and trained to fight—are placed in a pit to fight each other for spectators’ entertainment and gambling. The fight ends when one of the dogs will not or cannot continue. Bait animals, which are often puppies, cats, and stolen pets, are tied up and used to train fighting dogs. Dogfights serve as a host to gang activity, illegal gambling as well as drug abuse and dealing, and it contributes to the destruction of neighborhoods.

Dogfighting—including fighting, watching or participating in any way—is a felony in Florida.

The HSUS estimated that in 2007:

- Approximately 250,000 dogs were placed in fighting pits nationwide (this number does not include cockfighting or animals used as bait animals)
- Approximately 40,000 people were involved in organized dogfighting and an additional 100,000 were involved as street-level fighters

Animal Hoarding: Horrifying Stories of Animal Suffering

Animal hoarders cause severe—even fatal—neglect for animals in their custody. Hoarded animals are commonly deprived of minimal standards of nutrition, sanitation, shelter, exercise and veterinary care, which often result in starvation, illness and death. The overcrowding, confinement and lack of socialization for hoarded animals often results in extreme psychological stress.

- The Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) estimates that approximately 250,000 animals per year are hoarding victims
- Hoarding is a public health concern as the living conditions of animal hoarders can cause disease in both humans and animals
- Some animal hoarding studies found that animals are found dead or suffering from “obvious disease or injury” in 80 percent of hoarding cases
- Companion pets are involved in as many as 65 percent of hoarding cases
- Victims of animal hoarding often suffer for months or even years in distress
- Animal hoarders often have a variety of psychological disorders

Sources: The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Pet-Abuse.com, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).