

Electronic Posting of Inspection (A, B, C, E, H & T) Reports
May 13, 2009

Good morning,

I would like to take this opportunity to update you about new information on our Web site at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/. In the last several years, APHIS began posting to its Web site certain frequently requested documents related to animal welfare, including facility inspection reports. Our goal was to be as transparent as possible and eventually create a system that would enable us to post all of our inspection reports online. I am happy to announce that APHIS has achieved that goal and beginning May 26, 2009, all inspection reports for Class A, B, and C licensees and Class E, H, and T registrants (animal breeders, dealers, exhibitors, and registered exhibitors, intermediate handlers, and carriers respectively) will be available online.

In the future, we also plan to post inspection reports for Class R registrants (research facilities); and those we do on a courtesy basis for Class F and Class V entities (Federal agencies and Veteran's Administration facilities, respectively). We will provide an update on our progress in that area soon. In addition, we are looking closely at reestablishing our practice of sharing information with stakeholders regarding enforcement actions taken under the Animal Welfare Act. Again, we will share more details once we reach a decision about how best to convey this information.

Under the Animal Welfare Act, APHIS issues licenses and registers certain animal businesses and research facilities. Once licensed or registered, those entities must undergo periodic inspections in which their recordkeeping practices, housing structures, cleanliness, and handling of covered animals is reviewed for compliance with the AWA. During these inspections, reports are generated that notify a licensee or registrant if anything needs to be improved in order to meet the Agency's requirements. Inspection reports are currently available to the public through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. For the past several years, inspection reports have been the most frequently requested document from APHIS with approximately 850 requests fulfilled each year.

To access the inspection reports, visit the APHIS homepage at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on FOIA Reading Room, in the right-hand portion of the screen. The inspection reports will be available under the Animal Welfare heading in the Reading Room. Choose the type of licensee or registrant you are interested in, and then choose the State. Once you choose the State, you will be able to scroll through the alphabetical list of licensee or registrant names and make your selection. The documents are available in PDF format and you can open, print, and/or save as many as you like. Our list will be updated monthly.

Many of you may know that we maintain and make available lists of active licensed and registered facilities on our Web site. Many people have used these "active" lists to locate

AWA-regulated facilities. For ease of reference we will continue to provide these lists to help you cross reference with the available inspection reports.

The posting of inspection reports to our Web site is a significant step in our ongoing efforts to be as transparent as possible about how we enforce animal welfare standards. This effort is consistent with the direction of President Obama to Federal agencies regarding openness and transparency. We have received positive feedback from many interested parties on the information we make available on the APHIS Web site, and we welcome continued feedback from our partners as we make additional strides.

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