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Chicago group sheds light on dog abuse for National Puppy Mill Awareness Day



Kathy Mordini, Chicago Pets Examiner

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Supporters of the Puppy Mill Project will protest at Puppies R Us on Saturday from noon until 3 p.m. The store purchases dogs from Puppy Mills.

Credits: Puppy Mill Project

Animal lovers around the country will be joining forces this Saturday in an effort to build awareness of the puppy mill epidemic in the United States. Saturday is National Puppy Mill Awareness Day and various groups will be holding protests, marches and special events in an effort to educate more people about the plight of the dogs sold in pet stores. Chicago's own organization The Puppy Mill Project will be protesting at Puppies R' Us at 3404 North Ashland in Chicago.

"Around 70 percent of Americans are just not aware of the horrors of the puppy mills," says Cari Meyers founder of the Puppy Mill Project. "The dogs sold in pet stores are born in horrific conditions at breeding farms across the country and the breeding dogs are treated very inhumanely. The cute puppy you see in the window is just one direct truck ride away from the puppy mill to the store. You have a choice of where to find your next pet and you need to do your due diligence on where the pet came from before you purchase that pet."

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Location: 3404 N. Ashland Avenue, Chicago

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The group protests every weekend at Puppies R' Us and will be there from noon until 3 p.m. on Saturday. They hope to be joined by representatives of Chicago's breed rescues who often end up taking in many of the dogs sold at the stores when purchasers realize they can't afford the dog or are unprepared for handling that breed.

"We'd like everyone to come with their dogs, their kids, their friends and their energy," adds Meyer. "We are encouraging

people to make their own signs or they can use some of ours as we hold our own rally to inform the residents of Lakeview about puppy mills. When we go out and protest, people do stop and ask questions and we find out that there is a lot of community support. The neighborhood residents want the stores gone but most of the people buying the dogs are coming from outside the area."

The group was formed in 2009 and has worked to educate Chicago-area residents about puppy mills and to shed light on the stores that sell dogs that come from these unscrupulous breeders.

"We are now able to prove that the dogs sold in stores are not from someone's living room like most of the people in the pet stores will try to tell you," adds Meyer. "New laws make it possible track where all the dogs come from before they arrive at your neighborhood pet store. Consumers can go to our website and look up each store and see that the dogs are coming from breeding operations that deal in hundreds of dogs a year. It's not some little old lady in Missouri, it's a puppy mill."

They've protested at the Posh Pups on Halstead and pet stores at Gurnee Mills and Northbrook Court and have helped close down those three stores and one other location. They've also stopped new stores from opening their doors. Learn more about the organizations efforts online and follow them on Facebook.

Suggested by the author:

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By Kathy Mordini
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Kathy Mordini is a public relations specialist and former journalists who is passionate about educating the public on pet adoption. She has...

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