

New report claims 74 dogs died at Florida racing tracks in 2013

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SARASOTA, Fla. -- The dog racing industry is once again under fire thanks to a new report issued by GREY2K USA, an agency that lobbies for increased regulation of the dog racing industry. The report states that there were 74 greyhound deaths in the state of Florida between May and December of last year.

"Greyhounds are losing their lives just so someone can place a \$2 bet," says GREY2K's Christine Dorchak. "As these new records show, a greyhound is dying every three days at a Florida dog track. This has just got to stop."

GREY2K is now pushing for even more regulation of the dog racing industry. Thanks to the group's efforts, state lawmakers passed a measure requiring track operators to notify the state within 18 hours of a greyhound's death. That reporting requirement went into effect in last May, with GREY2K noting reports of 74 dog deaths at a track or racing kennel statewide by the end of 2013.

"The report will show that greyhounds suffer heat strokes, they break their legs, or they simple die of exhaustion," Dorchak says.

We pulled state records and were able to verify that at least 5 greyhound deaths occurred right here at the Sarasota Kennel Club during the May-December time period. But the report from the state does not show what caused those deaths.

The report is not without controversy, and representatives from the American Greyhound Council dispute Grey2K's claim that 74 greyhounds died statewide.

"GREY2K is out to eliminate the industry and abolish the industry, so I'm not sure their a credible source of information on the issue," says the American Greyhound Council's Marsha Kelly. "Having said that, anytime there is a report of a greyhound fatality we take it very seriously."

Kelly says the group has contacted the state to get the report, and they have and will continue to work to make sure all greyhounds are safe.

"As a statistical fact, the number of injuries in greyhound racing is very small, with fewer than one half of one percent result in an injury," Kelly says. "Greyhound racing has worked very hard over the last decade or more to reduce injuries."

The issues surrounding greyhound racing are expected to take center stage in Tallahassee Wednesday, when GREY2K and the ASPCA officially present their report in the hopes of getting more regulations passed.