

Good Deeds

Doing breed rescue isn't just about rehoming dogs; rescue groups also spend time educating owners and offering advice. If the problems are behavioral, a good animal behaviorist can often work wonders and this may allow a dog that might have been surrendered to a rescue group to instead remain in the home.

Rescue volunteers have noticed is that many times it never occurs to these people to contact their breeder for advice. In some cases, their breeder lives in another state and the puppy was just a commodity to be sold, so these owners probably think that contacting that breeder probably wouldn't be of much help anyway. It is surprising how many people just hop on the internet these days to buy a puppy. Many people don't seem to realize the risk they are taking when purchasing a puppy from someone sight unseen. The following is a list of "red flags" our rescue group compiled as an aid for potential buyers to use when looking for a breeder. We have this list as a handout at rescue events. If someone asks your advice on how to go about purchasing a puppy of any breed, you might find it helpful also.

How to spot a bad breeder or puppy mill:

- They take Visa, MasterCard or Pay Pal. (This is usually a sign of a high volume producer or dealer.)
- They will not refund your money under any circumstances. If you have purchased a puppy with a serious physical defect or illness, do you really want to get another puppy from this same breeder?
- They allow you to purchase a puppy without asking any information about you or your living situation.
- They often have multiple breeds of dogs that are used for breeding and may have multiple litters at one time.
- They refuse to let you visit their home or see where the puppies are raised. Don't be misled with excuses such as they don't allow strangers to visit, not wanting to expose puppies to diseases, house isn't tidy etc. Instead they offer to meet you somewhere to sell you the puppy. This may seem like they are just being nice, but their real aim is to keep you away from their property so that you cannot see how many dogs they have or how they are housed.
- They sell imported puppies. These pups are bred purely for profit and are

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at risk for serious illnesses. They are taken from their mothers too young and arrive in this country extremely stressed and often ill or suffering from parasites.

- They will pressure you to decide quickly to purchase a puppy and may insist on non-refundable deposits before they will spend any time with you.
- Signs of a good breeder:
- They will talk to you and will ask you questions about your lifestyle and intentions before selling you a puppy.
- They will want you to come to their home & will show you how the puppies have been raised. They may request the right to visit your home before the sale or after.
- They will have the mother in the home and possibly the father.
- They will be able to tell you about the ancestors & will supply you with a pedigree of the puppies at no extra charge and the dogs are all AKC registered.
- They will tell you to call anytime if you have questions -- even long after you bring the pup home.
- They belong to breed clubs and follow a code of ethics.
- They provide a contract with a written guarantee allowing you a refund of the purchase price if your veterinarian finds something wrong with the puppy soon after purchase.
- They have breeding stock evaluated by a neutral party by entering their dogs in shows. Those who show their dogs are usually trying to breed the best dogs possible. This means best in health and temperament, as well as appearance.
- They will tell you how to select a good vet or provide you with names/addresses of ones they recommend. They will explain the importance of training and socializing a puppy and will provide you with written information about the care of your puppy.
- They allow you to visit the litter, but are careful about the spread of disease. They may ask that you wash your hands and remove your shoes, and may not allow you to touch unvaccinated pups, but will still allow you to see where the pups are raised and will let you interact with the adults.
- They will encourage all pets to be spayed or neutered and may require it in their sales contract.

*Kona says hang
in there! Spring
is coming!*

