



PETA Factsheet

Perry's Exotic Petting Zoo [Perry, Craig]

USDA License #42-C-0101, 3294 54th St. Trail, Center Point, IA 52213

Perry's Exotic Petting Zoo (a.k.a. Perry's Wilderness Ranch & Zoo) has failed to meet minimal federal standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has cited Perry's Exotic Petting Zoo numerous times for failure to provide adequate veterinary care—including to three 11-day-old tiger cubs used for photo sessions who died the same day—for failure to provide minimum space, for failure to provide drinking water, for mishandling animals, for failure to provide shelter from inclement weather, for filthy enclosures, and for failure to maintain enclosures. Perry was penalized \$2,000 by the USDA for operating without a license, for filthy conditions, for unsanitary food storage, and for facilities in disrepair. Perry's tiger cub bit a man during a photo op at a fair. Perry attends exotic animal auctions, sells big cats as "pets," and disposes of unwanted display animals through advertisements in dubious animal trade publications. Perry stood by and watched as an elephant trainer beat Perry's elephant with baseball bats and ax handles and jolted her with electrical shock. Contact PETA for documentation.

November 8, 2006: The USDA cited Perry for improper drainage. An enclosure housing a zebra had standing water in at least one-third of the surface area as well as all of the area under the only shelter, and water and fecal matter had accumulated in an area housing two water buffaloes.

July 2005: Craig Perry was mauled by a tiger at the Hawthorn Corporation's circus-training facility in McHenry County, Illinois. One of 14 tigers circled Perry during a photo shoot and then attacked his left leg. Perry required immediate surgery and suffered nerve damage.

June 15, 2005: The USDA cited Perry for filthy animal enclosures, which contained the remains of a calf and chickens that had been fed to tigers and a lion 24 hours previously. The inspector wrote, "[L]arge numbers of flying insects were observed swarming on and above the uneaten meat portions." Perry was also cited for improper drainage resulting in areas of standing water and/or excrement-laden mud with algae growth in enclosures housing tigers, camels, sheep, goats, and cows.

February 8, 2005: The USDA cited Perry for failure to clean animal enclosures of excessive accumulations of snow, ice, excrement, and/or food wastes. Exotic cats, wolves, and goats were slipping on icy surfaces and carcass bones were embedded in ice and snow. Perry was also cited for structurally unsound enclosures in disrepair, failure to provide animals with wholesome, palatable, and uncontaminated food and failure to follow a nutritional feeding program provided by the facility's veterinarian for its 13 wild canine and feline animals. Perry was also cited for failure to have records of acquisition for six tigers and disposition records documenting the status or location of numerous animals who were no longer at the facility, including two reindeer, a zebra, a zedonk, a camel, an audad, three elands, one longhorn cow, and one bobcat.

January 20, 2005: The USDA cited Perry for failure to have a responsible party available to conduct an animal welfare inspection.

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December 27, 2004: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide sufficient distance and/or barriers between the animals and the public during photo shoots with tiger cubs and for failure to have dangerous animals under the direct control of a knowledgeable and experienced animal handler. The inspector wrote, “[The] cubs are not restrained nor do they have any means for direct control by an experienced handler when the photos are being taken by the general public. ... [O]ne of the cubs became unruly when the handler attempted to place the animal next to a member of the public.”

March 26, 2004: The USDA cited Perry for failure to establish an animal escape/attack plan and notified Perry that lack of same “could endanger the public and the handler.” Perry was also cited for improper waste disposal.

February 27, 2003: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide veterinary care to three tiger cubs who died. The inspector wrote, “On 22 February 2003, Licensee observed progressive health problems (vomiting, listlessness, dehydration) in three 11-day old tiger cubs (born 11 February 2003) while on exhibit in Thornton, CO. The first cub died on the morning of 22 Feb, the second cub died later during the day, and the third cub died later that evening. The cubs were in immediate need of appropriate veterinary care and none was provided.” Perry was cited for mishandling tiger cubs who later died. The cubs had been handled and used for photographs with the public on the day before their deaths. Two days prior to their deaths, the 8-day-old cubs were acquired in Ohio and transported to Iowa and Colorado. Two of the cubs had not yet opened their eyes. During photo sessions, they were removed from heated enclosures and exposed to cold warehouse temperatures. The inspector wrote, “[T]ransportation and handling stresses cannot be ruled out as contributing to their failed health. ... Licensee must be aware of the potential adverse health effects of such stresses on very young animals.” Perry was also cited for failure to provide the tiger cubs with a wholesome, nutritious, veterinarian-approved diet.

February 1, 2003: The USDA cited Perry for failure to have a complete program of veterinary care, failure to provide sufficient space to brachiating primates, and failure to comply with safety regulations for tigers and lions used for photo opportunities with the public.

March 1, 2001: Perry advertised “for sale or trade” in *Animal Finders’ Guide* a 6-month-old white tiger cub used in photo ops. Perry also advertised that he wanted numerous baby animals. *Animal Finders’ Guide* is a publication where exotic animal auctions, trophy-hunting facilities, breeders, dealers, and members of the public advertise a variety of animals for sale.

September 10, 2000: A white tiger cub from Perry’s Exotic Petting Zoo was removed from the New Mexico State Fair after he bit a man on the arm during a photo op. The state wildlife agency ordered Perry to remove several exotic animals because he had failed to obtain the proper permit.

July 23, 2000: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide veterinary care to two sheep with excessively matted hair coats and failure to have an attendant supervising animals during periods of public contact in the petting zoo.

June 27, 2000: The USDA cited Perry for failure to maintain enclosures, for inadequate drainage in the lion, coyote, zebra, camel, and llama enclosures that contained standing water, algae buildup, and animal waste, for unsanitary conditions in tiger and bobcat enclosures with an accumulation of excreta, and for failure to provide adequate shelter in the lion enclosure. The inspector also noted that the coyote is still limping on three legs.

March 29, 2000: The inspector noted, “Facility DVM looked at coyote on March 1, 2000, and suggested NO treatment in letter dated the same. On this date of reinspection, coyote still exhibits reluctance to bear weight on rear right leg.”

February 24, 2000: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide veterinary care to a coyote with an injured right, rear leg, failure to maintain the camel enclosure, and unsanitary conditions in the exotic cat enclosure that contained decaying animal carcasses and an accumulation of excreta and debris.

November 16, 1999: The USDA cited Perry for failure to have a responsible party available to conduct an animal welfare inspection.

March 23, 1999: Perry was cited for failure to have an adequate program of veterinary care.

October 2, 1998: A USDA inspector noted that Perry’s program of veterinary care was incomplete.

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August 2, 1998: The USDA cited Perry for failure to clean a transport trailer that was excessively dirty with animal waste.

July 21, 1998: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct a previously identified violation of not repairing the perimeter fence.

March 26, 1998: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct a previously identified violation of not repairing the perimeter fence. Perry was also cited for failure to provide adequate veterinary care. Perry's veterinarian of record terminated his services on March 15, 1998, and Perry had not retained a new veterinarian. Since January, two watusi cattle and one camel had died, and the veterinarian stated that he had not examined the animals prior to their deaths or determined the causes of death. The inspector noted that the deer enclosure remained filthy with an excess accumulation of excreta.

February 4, 1998: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct a previously identified violation of not providing drinking water to deer. Perry was also cited for failure to maintain the perimeter fence and failure to dispose of an excessive accumulation of waste in the deer enclosure.

November 12, 1997: The USDA cited Perry for improper food storage and failure to provide clean drinking water to fallow deer.

September 17, 1997: The USDA cited Perry for improper food storage, inadequate record-keeping, and mishandling lion cubs brought to the New Mexico State Fair. The inspector wrote, "Two 9-week-old lion cubs are on exhibit from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. Both cubs should not be exposed to excessive public handling or exhibited for periods of time which would be detrimental to their health or well-being."

September 10, 1997, September 9, 1997, and August 21, 1997: Perry was cited by the USDA for failure to have a responsible party available to conduct an animal welfare inspection.

November 27, 1996: Perry agreed to pay a \$2,000 civil penalty to settle USDA charges of operating without an exhibitor license and failure to: keep water receptacles clean and sanitized; keep rabbit enclosures clean; keep premises clean and in good repair; maintain structurally sound enclosures for big cats and bears; store food in a manner to prevent contamination; provide animals with adequate shelter

June 3, 1996: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct a previously identified violation of not providing minimum space to a leopard. Perry was also cited for failure to maintain enclosures, for failure to provide adequate shelter for bear, coyote, and tiger enclosures, for inadequate drainage in tiger and coyote enclosures, for improper food storage (the inspector found 200 pounds of rancid meat in a broken freezer and frozen bloody water on the floor and walls in a second freezer), for giving algae- and excreta-laden drinking water to foxes and rabbits, for failure to clean the carnivore and omnivore pens that were filthy with an excessive accumulation of feces and food remnants, and for failure to provide veterinary care to a tiger exhibiting lameness in rear legs.

August 24, 1995: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct a previously identified violation of not providing adequate shelter. Perry was also cited for failure to have an adequate barrier around cages for dangerous carnivores, for failure to provide a primary enclosure for a grizzly bear, for failure to maintain enclosures for five black bears, for failure to provide a permanent shelter for an elephant stored in a travel trailer, for failure to provide minimum space to a leopard kept in a 2'x2' den box, for improper food storage that included rotting meat, for inadequate feeding, for failure to dispose of a large pile of waste that measured 20' across and 4' high, for having green, algae-laden water in the bear enclosure, for failure to clean a trailer where the elephant was kept that had excessive excreta and waste on the walls, floor, and ceiling, for failure to provide adequate water to the elephant in 84-degree heat, and for improper handling.

August 9, 1995: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide adequate shelter to coyotes and bears.

July 31, 1995: According to *The Omaha World-Herald*, zoo owner Craig Perry was at Lolli Bros. exotic animal auction in Missouri when an African Cape buffalo fatally gored a man.

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August 12, 1994: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct previously identified violations of not providing adequate shelter to big cats and bears and poor housekeeping. Perry was also cited for failure to clean drinking water receptacles that were contaminated with algae, dirt, and debris, failure to clean a filthy rabbit hutch, improper food storage, failure to erect perimeter fencing, and inadequate fencing around the elephant pen.

July 1, 1994: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct a previously identified violation of not providing adequate shelter to big cats and bears. Perry was also cited for poor housekeeping.

June 8, 1994: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide adequate shelter to big cats and bears.

May 1, 1994: According to *The Omaha World-Herald*, an African lion whom Perry sold to an area resident in October 1993 was donated back to Perry after neighbors complained about the dangerous animal being kept in a residential area.

April 7, 1994: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct a previously identified violation of not cleaning cages for the bears and big cats that were filthy with feces and soiled straw. Perry was also cited for failure to provide primates with minimum space, failure to maintain enclosures, failure to erect a perimeter fence, and improper food storage.

April 6, March 30, March 29, and March 15, 1994: Perry was cited by the USDA for failure to have a responsible party available to conduct an animal welfare inspection.

December 12, 1993: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide minimum space to a Patagonian cavy and failure to clean cages for the big cats, bears, and cavy that were filthy with manure and soiled hay.

October 6, 1993: Perry was cited by the USDA for failure to have a responsible party available to conduct an animal welfare inspection.

May 5, 1993: The USDA cited Perry for failure to correct previously identified violations of not maintaining enclosures in need of repairs, not cleaning enclosures with an accumulation of feces, not providing adequate shelter for deer, and improper food storage.

February 12, 1993: The USDA cited Perry for failure to contain a camel who was running loose, failure to maintain enclosures, failure to clean enclosures with an accumulation of manure, failure to provide veterinary care to leopards with hair loss, failure to provide deer with shelter from inclement weather, and improper food storage.

February 11, 1993: Perry was cited by the USDA for failure to have a responsible party available to conduct an animal welfare inspection.

November 3, 1992: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide minimum space and environment enrichment to a baboon and a chimpanzee, for failure to maintain camel pens, for failure to provide the black bear and deer with shelter from inclement weather, and for improper food storage.

August 27, 1992: The USDA cited Perry for failure to provide a sufficient safety barrier between the public and an African lion.

March 5, 1992: According to an affidavit given by Craig Perry to the USDA, Perry purchased an elephant from David Meeks (see factsheet for Hollywild Animal Park), and brought the elephant, named Teaha, to Don Meyer, d.b.a. Jo-Don Farms, in Wisconsin, to be trained for elephant rides. Perry witnessed Meyer training Teaha and described "the elephant being beaten with baseball bats, ax handles, and [Meyer] using electrical charges plugged into [a] 110-volt electrical outlet [to shock the elephant]. ... During this five-month training period, the elephant was never out of the barn and her leg chains were never removed. She had three to four leg chains on her at all times." Perry described Teaha as being covered with cuts and open wounds and stated that when she was later let into a pasture, "the elephant could hardly walk." Teaha died at the poorly run Natural Bridge Zoo in Virginia in January 1996.

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