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ROADSIDE PET SALES ILLEGAL

Spring often brings out roadside purveyors of puppies in Missoula's commercial areas, but those sales are illegal in the City of Missoula. Missoula Animal Control asks the public not to purchase pets in this way and to report such illegal sales to Animal Control at 541-7387.

The City ordinance reads: It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, trade, or barter a live animal on a roadside, public right-of-way, commercial parking lot, or at an outdoor special sale, swap meet, flea market, parking lot sale, or similar event. (6.08.447 Pet Sales prohibited)

Legitimate breeders do not sell puppies in this way, says Ed Franceschina, Missoula Animal Control Supervisor. Most breeders require background checks of purchasers and follow up with the new owners. Puppies sold on roadsides often are not vaccinated, have never seen a veterinarian and may not be properly bred to ensure good health. Such sales encourage impulse buying, and puppies end up homeless at Animal Control or in shelters.

"It's just not good for the animals," Franceschina said. "And it's not good for the community."

Animal Control officers will respond to reports of violations as soon as possible. At least one officer is on duty daily from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Penalties for these illegal sales are:

Offense	Minimum Fine
1 st offense	\$50.00 + court costs
2 nd offense (within one year of the 1 st offense)	\$75.00 + court costs
3 rd offense (within one year of the 1 st offense)	\$225 + court costs
4 th and subsequent offenses (within one year of the 1 st offense)	\$300 + court costs