

## **Statement from Steve M. Sarras Kennels**

No greyhound has ever tested positive for cocaine in Steve M. Sarras Kennels. Animal rights extremists are promoting stories to the media that cocaine was found in greyhounds. These stories are lies, misleading and meant to elicit anger and hysteria to the general public. Quite simply it is propaganda against the greyhound industry. These animal rights extremists also have ties to domestic terrorist groups. These groups use manipulation of information to promote their own agenda. State Regulators have suspended my former trainer's license pending a formal hearing in August of 2017. I no longer employ him. Americans are presumed innocent until proven guilty. As an employer I do not condone illegal drug use. Steve M. Sarras Kennel also has complied with all aspects of Florida Pari Mutuel Wagering laws. We care deeply about all of our dogs and would never put them in harm's way.

The positive tests are for trace amounts of Benzoyllecgonine. Trace positive results of benzoyllecgonine is not proof of dogs being drugged for performance enhancement. Unfortunately propaganda groups would like the general public to believe otherwise. Technological advances of urinalysis equipment can detect trace amounts of any substance. These positive tests are registering in nanograms. A nanogram is a billionth of a gram. From what I have been informed the trace amounts range from 2 to 28 nanograms. A very fine grain of sand is 350 nanograms, for reference.

The matter involves a former employee of mine and hasn't been fully investigated at this point in time by regulatory agencies. The individual has appealed his positive samples and is entitled by law to due process., It is very possible that the results were from human contact by a trainer, kennel staff, or handlers at the track that may have used the drug or contamination of feed at the source. If it is proven that this is a result of drugs in the workplace it will be dealt appropriately. My kennel does not condone the use of illegal drugs..

Florida law mandates all kennels relinquish their dogs on race day for at least 1 hour up to 6 hours . If cocaine was given on race day, any effects would be over while in the state and track's custody. During that time kennel staff is prohibited from access to the dogs racing to protect the integrity of wagering. The only individuals with access are track and state employees until after the dogs race. Urinalysis is performed prior to racing. A urinalysis sample on a dog given cocaine on race day would without question test positive for Cocaine, not Benzoyllecgonine. We are investigating the cause of the contaminated urine samples, the chain of custody of the collection and handling of the urine sample.

An alarming 90% of US paper currency has trace amounts of cocaine on it. Handling it could cause a trace positive urine sample on anyone handling that money.