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# 10 bucks gets you a gator permit

*INDIANAPOLIS: Reptiles don't have to be licensed until they reach 5 feet*

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INDIANAPOLIS | The dead gator found dumped in Gary may have started life as a legal pet.

State law allows young crocodilians -- alligators, caimans and crocodiles -- to be sold in pet stores and kept domestically.

"Once it reaches 5 feet (long) we just require a permit for it," said Linnea Petercheff, operations staff specialist at the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Division of Fish and Wildlife.

People typically purchase the reptiles as babies and get rid of them two or three years later, before they grow as large as the alligator that's drawing attention to Gary's problem with illegal dumping.

Once a gator or croc grows longer than 5 feet, the owner is required to shell out \$10 for a wild animal permit from the state. DNR inspectors make annual house calls to check safety measures, including the presence of a sturdy chain-link fence at least 6 feet high.

DNR also issues licenses for lions, tigers, and bears -- not to mention cougars, coyotes, venomous snakes, raccoons and skunks. Of the 280 wild animal permits currently in circulation, about 75 are for crocodilians, Petercheff said.

The Humane Society of the United States wants state lawmakers to put a moratorium on new wild animal permits and is backing legislation by state Sen. Connie Sipes, D-New Albany, to do so.

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Posted on Sat, Jan. 20, 2007 email this print this  
Dead alligator dumped illegally on Gary street  
From The Associated Press

GARY, Ind. — Mayor Rudy Clay says he couldn't believe it when he saw the latest piece of rubbish illegally dumped along a Gary street — a 5- to 6-foot-long dead alligator.

"I jumped back," Clay said after visiting Thursday's reptile discovery.

The dead animal was found among a pile of roofing shingles and old tires dumped illegally from a 40-foot-long rolling garbage container in the city's Glen Park area.

Gary code enforcement officers arrested an employee of a recycling company on illegal dumping charges for leaving the animal and the other trash.

Clay said he's grown weary of his city being used as a dumping ground.

"The guy's orders were to dump anywhere in Gary," he said. "We've had all kinds of things dumped in our community. They've been using our community as a landfill."

In the past, city officials have arrested people for dumping everything from hypodermic needles to 47 barrels of magnesium nitrate.