



# Disaster Preparedness for Horses and Large Animals

## Before the Disaster

### Plan Ahead

Determine the best place for animal confinement in case of a disaster. Find alternate water source if the power is out and pumps are not working. You should always have a minimum of three days feed and water on hand.

### Evacuation

Know ahead of time where you can take your animals if evacuation is required. Contact your local emergency management office for information on sheltering of large animals. You should also check with your local fairgrounds, private farms/stables, and the State Department of Agriculture.

### Identification

Photograph, identify and inventory all your horses. Permanent identification is absolutely necessary, microchips as well as tattoos, brands, and etched hooves should be considered. It is best not to use temporary identification but if that becomes necessary use tags on halters, neckbands, and duct tape with permanent writing to identify your animals.

### Vaccination and Medical Records

It is important to have your horse's vaccinations up to date. Keep copies of all medical records available. Information should include special medications, dosing instructions, allergies, and dietary requirements. Your records should also have the name and phone number of your veterinarian.

### Vehicles

Keep trailers, vans and trucks well maintained, full of gas, and ready to move at all times. Work with your animals ahead of time, making sure they will load.

### Fire Protection

Clear fire breaks around your home, barns, and property lines. Keep your fire fighting tools handy.

### Flood Protection

Identify high ground on your property or other nearby evacuation sites, in the event of flooding.

## During the Disaster

- Listen to the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on your TV or radio. Consider the purchase of a NOAA Weather Radio with alert siren.
- Evacuate your horses early.
- When you evacuate take all vaccination and medical records as well as your emergency disaster kit. Be sure you have enough feed and water for three days.

- If possible, use roads for your horse's evacuation that will not be used by human evacuees.
- If you must leave your horses, leave enough feed and water for three days. Do not rely on automatic watering systems, they may be out if power is lost.

### **Leading Causes of Death in Large Animals During a Disaster**

- Collapsed barns
- Kidney failure do to dehydration
- Electrocution from downed power lines
- Fencing failures

### **After the Disaster**

- Check fences to be sure they are intact. Check pastures and fences for sharp objects that could injure your horses.
- Check for downed power lines, trees, and debris.
- Beware of local wildlife that could enter your area and pose a danger to your horses.
- If you find a lost animal isolate it from your horses until it can be returned or examined by your veterinarian.
- If you find you have lost an animal contact local veterinarians, the humane society, stables, surrounding farms, and other facilities. Listen to the EBS for listings of groups that may be accepting lost animals.

### **Disaster Preparedness Kit**

- Portable radio and extra batteries
- Plastic trash barrel with lid
- Water buckets
- Stored feed
- Non-nylon leads, halters, shanks, and leg wraps
- Horse blankets or sheets
- First aid items
- Tarps
- Portable generators
- Flashlights
- Shovel
- Lime or bleach
- Fly spray
- Wire cutters/Sharp Knife
- Hoof pick

### **Vaccination**

At the present time there are no mandatory vaccinations required for horses in Washington State under Washington law, however a negative Coggins Test for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) is required to move a horse into or out of the state. While no mandatory vaccination is requirement for West Nile Virus, which is approaching Washington State, a commercial vaccine is available. Consult your veterinarian for other recommended vaccinations.