



# Emergency Preparedness

## Being Prepared During Times of Disaster

In the event of a disaster, your veterinarian knows how important it is for you as a horse owner to have pre-planned actions and proper information to make rapid decisions that may save your horse's and even your own life.

### ASSESS YOUR RISKS

What are the most likely disasters in your area? (flood, fire, tornado, hurricane, nuclear accident, disease threat, chemical spill, ice storm, etc.)

#### For each type disaster, check:

- What are your major vulnerabilities?
- What can you do to minimize the damage?
- What plans do you have in place?
- Who do you need to contact?

### BEFORE THE EVENT

- Take a careful look at your property and identify the best place for your animals in each type of disaster you consider.
- Prepare for the possibility you might want to evacuate.
  - Check with your local veterinarian, law enforcement, animal control, or Ag extension agent for routes and recommendations.
- Find several alternative locations and check the entry requirements for each. Be sure to have agreements arranged for your animals **in advance**.
- Prepare an ID packet for each horse: age, sex, breed, color, registrations, unique ID's, photos, microchip numbers, etc.
- Write down any special feeding instructions; list any medications with dosage; record the name and phone number of your prescribing veterinarian.
- Be sure all vaccinations and medical records are in writing and up to date. Have current Coggins Test records. Consult your veterinarian for other recommended immunizations or tests.
- Take records with you. Records left at home may be damaged or destroyed during a disaster.
- Check for alternate water sources. Have fresh water and hay available for 48-72 hours.
- Keep trailers and vans well maintained and full of fuel.

- Keep insurance coverage current and adequate.
- Consider an event where you might be unable to save/evacuate all your animals. Make a priority list. Familiarize family and farm personnel with the list in case you are not there when the disaster occurs.

### **Prepare an emergency kit for a minimum of 72-hour care:**

- Plastic trash barrel with lid
- Tarpaulins
- Water buckets
- First aid items
  - Betadine or Nolvasan solutions
  - Antibiotic ointment
  - Gauze squares and bandages
  - Ichthammol ointment (feet)
  - Tranquilizer injections (optional)
  - Eye ointment
- Portable radio, flashlight and extra batteries
- Fire resistant, non-nylon leads and halters
- Knife, scissors, wire cutters
- Duct tape
- Livestock markers or paint
- Leg wraps
- Lime and bleach/disinfectant

### **DEVELOP A BUDDY SYSTEM**

Talk with a neighbor or friend; make arrangements to check on each other after a disaster. Tell one another if you are evacuating and to where, so authorities will know. Buddies may agree to pool resources, such as generators, water tanks, trailers, etc.

Permanently identify each horse by tattoo, microchip, brand, tag, photographs (front, rear, left and right side) and/or drawing. If disaster strikes before you can do this, paint or etch hooves, use neck or pastern bands, or paint your telephone number or last four digits of SSN on the side of the animal.

### **PRACTICE YOUR PLAN**

**When disaster strikes** remain calm and follow your plan! *Remember it is vital to be able to leave early in any mandatory evacuation to avoid getting stalled in traffic and create unnecessary hardships.*

### **AFTER AN EVENT**

- Notify family, friends and officials that you are OK, whether you stayed or evacuated. Use phones, radios, Internet, signs, or word of mouth.
- Inspect your premises carefully before turning out horses. Look for foreign materials (tin, glass, nails) and downed fences or power lines.

- Be careful leaving your animals unattended outside. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered, and your horses could easily become confused and lost.
- Check with your veterinarian or State Veterinarian's office for information of any disease threats that may exist because of the situation.
- If you find other horses, use extreme caution in handling, and work in pairs if possible. Keep the horse contained and isolated, and notify authorities as soon as possible.
- If any horses are lost, contact local authorities. **BE PREPARED TO IDENTIFY AND DOCUMENT OWNERSHIP WHEN CLAIMING LOST HORSES.**
- Listen to the emergency alert system (EAS) for information about locating lost animals.