



**American Association
of Equine Practitioners**

Horse Health Education

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

**Being Prepared During Times of Disaster:
Important Tips for Horse Owners**

www.aaep.org/horseowner



HORSE HEALTH EDUCATION: DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



In the event of a disaster, your veterinarian knows how important it is for you to have pre-planned actions and proper information to make rapid decisions.



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ASSESS YOUR RISK



What are the most likely disasters in your area?

- Flood
- Fire
- Tornado
- Hurricane
- Nuclear Accident
- Disease Threat
- Chemical Spill
- Ice Storm





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BEFORE THE EVENT



Take a careful look at your property to identify the best place to shelter your animals. In some cases, this may be a well-fenced pasture. Make sure there are no overhead power lines or large trees that may be blown over.



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BEFORE THE EVENT

The parish or county office of emergency preparedness officials are in charge.





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BEFORE THE EVENT



Find out who the animal officials are in your community (animal control, agriculture extension agents). Organize a mock disaster for your horse-owning community. Remember that veterinarians should be vital participants in emergency planning.

It is also important to map where horses are located within your community, as that information should be part of the animal action plan.



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BEFORE THE EVENT



Prepare for the possibility you might have to evacuate.

Check with your local veterinarian, law enforcement, animal control or agriculture extension office for routes and recommendations for evacuations.



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BEFORE THE EVENT



Some basic things to keep in mind before the event include:

- Prioritize horses that will be evacuating ahead of the storm and familiarize family and farm personnel with this list in case you are not there in the event of a disaster.
- Make sure you have access to a functional/safe horse trailer for evacuating and that horses will load easily on this trailer.



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BEFORE THE EVENT



- Place temporary visible identification marking on every horse with owner contact information.
- Evacuate at least three days ahead of dangerous weather (hurricane, tornado, etc.).



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BEFORE THE EVENT

Other important preparedness factors to keep in mind include:

- Finding several alternative housing locations and checking the entry requirements of each. Be sure to have agreements arranged for your animals in advance.
- Preparing an ID packet for each horse including age, sex, breed, color, registrations, unique IDs, photos, microchip numbers, Coggin's and health certificate papers, etc.





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BEFORE THE EVENT



- Writing down any special feeding instructions, list any medications with dosage and record the name and phone number of your prescribing veterinarian.
- Being sure all vaccinations and medical records (dental care, deworming, etc.) are current. Consult your veterinarian for other recommended immunizations or tests.



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BEFORE THE EVENT

- Be sure to take all current equine records (Coggin's, health certificate, etc.) when evacuating with your horse because records left at home may be damaged or destroyed during a disaster.
- Check for alternate water sources. Have fresh water (10 to 20 gallons per horse per day) and hay available for 48 to 72 hours.



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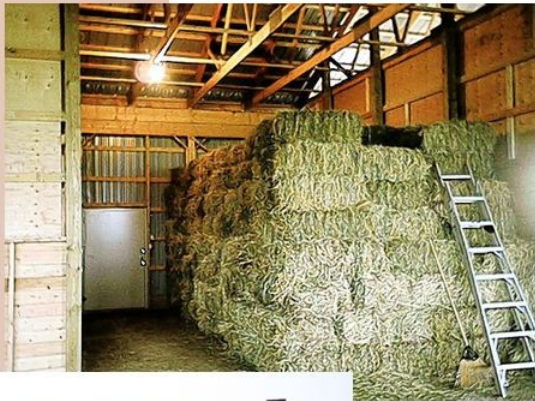
BEFORE THE EVENT

- Keep trailers and vans well maintained and full of fuel.
- Be sure to have enough cash available for fuel, and take provisions (food, water, first-aid kit, etc.) for both people and horses traveling with you.



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BEFORE THE EVENT



- DO NOT lock horses in stall/barn.
- Keep enough hay (elevated storage or covered in plastic) for five to seven days.
- Have a post-storm clean-up kit ready to go such as rakes, chain saw, hammer, nails, etc.
- Keep a copy of your evacuation plan on file with your local emergency management office.



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BEFORE THE EVENT



- First-aid items:
 - Betadine or Nolvasan solution
 - Antibiotic ointment
 - Gauze squares and bandages
 - Eye ointment

Consult your veterinarian for any additional first-aid items he/she may feel are appropriate.



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BEFORE THE EVENT



- Other items to include in your first-aid kit:
 - Portable Radio
 - Knife
 - Wire Cutters
 - Flashlight and extra batteries
 - Fire resistant, non-nylon leads and halters
 - Duct Tape
 - Scissors
 - Leg Wraps



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BEFORE THE EVENT



- Livestock paint markers or paint
- Foot wraps (i.e. baby diapers)
- Lime and bleach/disinfectant





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DEVELOP A BUDDY SYSTEM



Talk with a neighbor or friend to make arrangements to check on each other after a disaster.

Tell one another if you are evacuating and to where, so authorities will know.

Let parish or county EOC (Emergency Operations Center) or OEP (Office of Emergency Preparedness) know if horses will be left behind.



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DEVELOP A BUDDY SYSTEM



Some ways to permanently identify each horse in the event of an emergency may include:

- Microchip
- Tattoo
- ID Tag
- Photographs (front, rear, left and right side)



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DEVELOP A BUDDY SYSTEM



If disaster strikes before you can identify your horse, paint or etch hooves, use neck or pasterns bands or paint your telephone number or the last four digits of your SSN on the side of the animal.



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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 any unnecessary hardships.



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AFTER AN EVENT



- Notify family, friends and officials whether you are staying or evacuating by use of either phone, radio, Internet, signs or word of mouth.
- Inspect your premises carefully before turning out horses. Look for foreign materials (tin, nails, glass, etc.) and downed fences or power lines.



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AFTER AN EVENT



- 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 regarding any disease threats that may exist because of the situation.



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AFTER AN EVENT



- 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.
- Some understanding of the National Incident Command System is vital for effective disaster and emergency response planning.



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