

## ADDITIONAL ADVICE ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR PEOPLE WITH HORSES



From the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

### When a disaster is anticipated (e.g., within 1-2 days of the predicted landfall of a hurricane),

- Remember that during emergencies you are taking minimum actions to assure the animal's survival. Secure loose objects, clear walkways, and have enough fresh water and hay on hand for at least three days. (Each horse generally needs 12-20 gallons of water per day.)
- Determine if horses should be left in the pasture or in the barn. For example, in high winds, barns may provide protection from flying debris, but they also can be traps if they collapse. If a pasture has good fencing (well-maintained woven wire rather than barbed wire or electrical fencing) and limited trees, it is probably safer.
- If you think you might need to evacuate your horses from your property, determine several locations the animals could be taken, several routes to these locations, and the entry requirements for each. Your veterinarian, animal control officer, or local emergency manager may have suggestions. Locations that could be used for evacuation include private stables, race tracks, fair grounds, equestrian centers, private farms and humane societies, but do not simply assume that they have room. Make arrangements in advance with the owner/operators to accept your horses and, if possible, check again just before taking the horses there.
- Have trailers and vans maintained, full of gas and ready to move at all times. Plan to leave 48 hours before high winds are expected to build.
- Verify that each animal is well identified. If their ID is not permanently applied, use alternatives: paint or etch hooves, use neck bands or paint or clip your phone number on the side of each animal. Place a leather halter on each horse and attach a luggage tag with your name and phone number, and the horse's name. Write any special needs on an index card inside a zip-lock bag, wrapped around the side of the halter with tape.
- Prepare an emergency kit and keep it in a safe place, where you can get to it before or after a storm and take it with you. It should contain:
  - Documentation (proof of ownership, medical records)
  - Plastic trash barrel with lid
  - Water bucket
  - Blankets
  - Leg wraps
  - Tarpaulins
  - Fire resistant non-nylon leads and halters
  - Livestock markers or paint
  - Portable radio and flashlights with extra batteries

- Sharp knife, scissors, hoof pick, and wire cutters
- Duct tape
- Soap and towels
- Fly spray, and bleach/disinfectant
- Prescription medicines for 2 weeks
- First Aid supplies:
  - Antiseptic solutions (e.g., Iodine, Betadine or Nolvasan)
  - Electrolytes
  - Antibiotic ointment
  - Gauze squares and bandages
  - Antibiotic Eye ointment
  - Anti-inflammatory medications (e.g., “bute” / phenylbutasone, Flunixin Meglumine, Benamine)

### **At the Time of the Disaster,**

- STAY CALM! FOLLOW YOUR PLAN!
- Listen to the Emergency Broadcasting System (EBS) station on your portable radio for information about how to locate horse care providers offering services during the disaster and any special instructions about actions you should take to protect your animals.
- If you leave your home, take your horses' immunizations and health records with you. Records kept at home may be damaged during the disaster.
- If you evacuate and take your horses with you, take all your immunization and health records, your emergency kit and sufficient hay and water for a minimum 48 hour period. Call ahead, if possible, to make sure that your emergency location is still available.
- If you absolutely must leave your horses unattended at home, leave them in the area most appropriate for the type of disaster you previously selected, such as high ground in a flood. If a storm or floods may interrupt power, turn off circuit breakers to the barn. (A surge in return power could cause sparks and a fire.) Since automatic watering systems may fail, leave enough water readily available for the length of time you expect to be gone.

See also:

[The Care of Livestock and Horses in Disasters](#) (FEMA).  
[Guidelines to Follow During Equine Emergencies](#) and [Disaster Planning for Horse Farms](#) (AAEP).  
[Disaster Preparedness for Horses](#) and [Disaster Preparedness for Farm Animals](#) (HSUS).  
[Saving the Whole Family](#) (AVMA).