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ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF IOWA, INC.

Disaster Preparedness

Disaster Preparedness for Horses

From the Animal Rescue League of Iowa and the Humane Society of the United States

Why Horse Owners Need to Be Prepared

Disaster preparedness is important for all animals, but it takes extra consideration for horses because of their size and their transportation needs. If you think disasters happen only if you live in a flood plain, near an earthquake fault line or in a coastal area, you may be tragically mistaken. Disasters can happen anywhere and can take many different forms, from barn fires to hazardous materials spills to propane line explosions, and train derailments—all of which may necessitate evacuation. It is imperative that you are prepared to move your horses to a safe area.

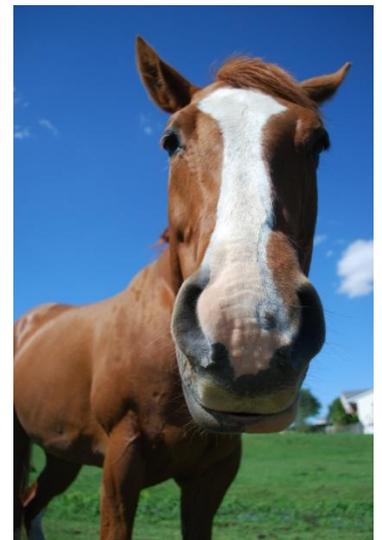
During an emergency, the time you have to evacuate your horses will be limited. With an effective emergency plan, you may have enough time to move your horses to safety. If you are unprepared or wait until the last minute to evacuate, you could be told by emergency management officials that you must leave your horses behind. Once you leave your property, you have no way of knowing how long you will be kept out of the area. If left behind, your horses could be unattended for days without care, food, or water. To help avoid this situation, we have prepared information and suggestions to help you plan for emergencies.

Barn Fires: The Leading Disaster for Horse Owners

Preventing barn fires and being prepared in the event of a fire can mean the difference between life and death for your horses. Knowledge of the danger of fires and how to deal with them are of the greatest importance and should be an ongoing concern to horse owners.

Fire Prevention Is Key

- Prohibit smoking in or around the barn. A discarded cigarette can ignite dry bedding or hay in seconds.
- Avoid parking tractors and vehicles in or near the barn. Engine heat and backfires can spark a flame.
- Also store other machinery and flammable materials outside the barn.



- Inspect electrical systems regularly and immediately correct any problems. Rodents can chew on electrical wiring and cause damage that quickly becomes a fire hazard.
- Keep appliances to a minimum in the barn. Use stall fans, space heaters, and radios only when someone is in the barn.
- Be sure hay is dry before storing it. Hay that is too moist may spontaneously combust.
- Store hay outside the barn in a dry, covered area when possible.

Be Prepared for a Barn Fire: It Can Save Your Horse's Life

- Keep aisles, stall doors, and barn doors free of debris and equipment.
- Mount fire extinguishers around the stable, especially at all entrances.
- Have a planned evacuation route for every stall in the barn.
- Familiarize employees and horse handlers with your evacuation plans.