

**HORSE COUNCIL  
BRITISH COLUMBIA**



***FIRE ! FLOOD! EARTHQUAKE!***

**WHAT DO I DO WITH MY HORSE!?**



**Learn what you need to do for you horses and farm before a disaster strikes.**

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY HORSE  
IN FIRE, FLOOD, AND/OR EARTHQUAKE?

This booklet evolved from the original information contained in “What Do I Do With My Horse In Fire, Flood, and/or Earthquake?” initiated by Rod Bergen and compiled by Stephanie Abronson and the members of the Monte Nido Mountain Ridge Riders, and originally published by the Monte Nido Paddock of Equestrian Trails, Inc., Corral 63, since 1992. The previous printed version of this booklet in a revised edition was by the City of Los Angeles and Stephanie Abronson, March 1997.

The section of this Booklet concerning Flooding was expanded by John E. Madigan, DVM, Dipl. ACVIM and head UC Davis Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital Rescue and Disaster Response Team, with permission as published in “The Horse Report,” Volume 15, Number 4, December 1997.

COPYRIGHT© 1998-2004, by Stephanie Abronson.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4	
Chapter I	Preparing Your Land and Your Supplies	5
Part 1	How do I prepare for a Fire?	5
Part 2	What about my horse?	7
Part 3	Drinking Water	10
Part 4	Feed Supplies	11
Part 5	First Aid	12
Part 6	Identification	13
Part 7	Preparing Yourself and Your Neighbors	14
Chapter II	Horse Behavior and Horse Handling In An Emergency	16
Part 1	How Do I Save My Horse?	16
Part 2	Leave or Stay?	18
Part 3	What Could Happen To My Horse If I Move Him	19
Part 4	The Barn and Corral Are On Fire!	20
Part 5	Flood, Earthquake, Hurricane, Tornado	21
Part 6	Helpers & Hinderers	23
Chapter III	Community Plan Activities	24
Chapter IV	First Aid Supplies	25

## DISCLAIMER

Neither the author of this Booklet, nor the copyright owner(s), the Monte Nido Mountain Ridge Riders, Equestrian Trails, Inc., nor any other sponsor, subsidizer or patron printing this booklet, makes any representation or warranty whatsoever regarding (i) the effectiveness of any product mentioned herein; or (ii) the effectiveness of any particular method, technique or process addressed herein, under the extreme conditions occasioned by a fire, flood, earthquake, or other natural disaster. The ideas expressed in this Booklet are merely set forth as suggestive to the reader of the types of issues, with which he or she should be concerned in maintaining the safety of his or her horse(s) or other members of the equine specie, and are not intended as an all-inclusive list for preparedness in the event of an emergency or a natural disaster.

## DEDICATION

To Sweet Honey, who was lost by her owner after being evacuated from the fire which passed through Monte Nido November 2, 1993; found after a diligent search, and restored home to live another year. Monte Nido is located in the beautiful Santa Monica Mountains, a national recreation area, off the coast of Malibu in Southern California.

# INTRODUCTION

*You smell smoke in the air. The ground begins to roll under foot. The skies have opened with a hundred-year rain. How high will the water crest? Will the hill behind you slide into your home?*

Now is when it occurs to you to wish you had done your pre-planning and set up your home so that you would have everything you would need in an **EMERGENCY**.

In the terrible beginning moments as you confront the **EMERGENCY**, you may find there is no one to help you, you can't find anything you need, what you have is broken, inadequate, or you can't get to your supplies.

When you plan, always consider the worst possibility: **No water, power, gas, roads, or communication!** And worst of all, **it's dark outside**.

The following pages have been prepared to start you thinking about your needs, your animal's needs, the needs of your property, and also your neighbors' needs. Many questions are asked. You must find most of the answers for your particular conditions.

You should focus on developing the resources necessary for an **EMERGENCY** - things that you will need for at least 72 hours, as well as for the possibility of an **EXTENDED EMERGENCY** that could go on for weeks, or even months.

Spaces have been left between sections for you to make notes. As you read through this handbook and review your own unique requirements, you may want to write down your thoughts and ideas.

Wherever we live and keep horses, we must be self-reliant for at least 72 hours. In the event of a major disaster, many horsekeeping community areas probably will not receive outside help because of their rural nature. Suburban areas may find themselves in the same situation. If a major disaster occurs, do not expect city or county services to be available. **We all need to be individually responsible, remain self-sufficient, and be able to provide our own personal and community self-help.**

# PREPARING YOUR LAND AND YOUR SUPPLIES

## Part 1 - HOW DO I PREPARE FOR A FIRE?

*(Consider also flood, mudslide, earthquake, hurricane, tornado or freezing weather—much of the same information will apply.)*

1. Review your own situation carefully. Consider all of the items that your feel are necessary to sustain your family, residence, property, out buildings, livestock, pets, etc. Decide what you would need to maintain the above at a basic critical level during an emergency. Next to your telephone, keep a written list of supplies and their location.

2. Keep emergency supplies and fire-fighting equipment in a location that should always be accessible. Do not use these tools except for an emergency, and keep them clean and in good working order. Have motors serviced at least twice a year. Be sure to get proper training on the use of all your fire fighting equipment. Often a used fire hose can be purchased from the Fire Department.

3. List of tools:

Fire Extinguishers (see also Part 2, No. 38., Horse Evacuation Kit.)  
Fire hose with nozzle and hydrant coupler  
Wrench to access the hydrant  
Gasoline powered pump to retrieve water from a swimming pool with a fire hose and nozzle  
Battery-powered radio for monitoring news reports and emergency evacuation broadcasts  
Flashlights and lanterns with a supply of fresh batteries  
First aid kit for horses and humans  
Ladders long enough to reach the roofs of all buildings on your property

Generator with a fuel supply would be helpful in an extended emergency.  
Shovel  
Rake  
Water buckets  
Leather gloves  
Claw hammer  
Sledge hammer  
Chainsaw  
Hoe  
Loppers  
Ax  
Machete  
Bolt cutters  
Pry bar  
Pitchfork  
Burlap bags

4. Wear protective clothing: Cotton, wool and leather fabrics are best. Synthetics melt and rubber burns. Wear long-sleeved shirts, and long cotton or wool pants. Leather gloves and boots (tennis or rubber shoes can melt). A Cotton bandanna can serve as a mask, sweatband and to protect your hair. Have a good pair of eye goggles and a respirator to protect your lungs from smoke.

5. Can the Fire Department find you and get fire fighting equipment in to your property? Your address must be easily seen from the street. If you have an electric/security gate, be sure everyone in the household knows how to open it when the power is out. Ask at your local fire station for information about a **Knox** box to insure that firefighters will have access.
6. Know where any/all fire hydrants in your area are located and what kind of tools will be required to access them.
7. Locate your gas shut-off valve and have the appropriate shut-off tool attached to the piping.
8. Know where the main electrical service panels are located, and know how to shut them off.
9. Store supplies of diesel fuel, gasoline, propane, kerosene, etc. at a safe distance from the house and barn.
10. Have a hose bib at each corner of every building—WITH A HOSE ATTACHED and a nozzle on each hose. Check condition of hoses every six months. It is a good idea to install sprinklers in, around, and on top of barns and stables.
11. Store trash barrels filled with water. Use smaller buckets to carry water. Have plenty of burlap bags and/or large bath towels ready. Soaked in water, they are useful for fire fighting or for personal and horse protection. Beware of wet towels or bags that may get so hot as to create steam, which can also burn you or your horse. Steam inhaled can sear lungs in any mammal.
12. Do not expect to have much water pressure as everyone else will be tapping into the local water supply, including the fire department. Be prepared to put out fresh hot spots with your stored water and bucket or wet burlap bag. Shovel dirt on the spot fire, if possible, in order to conserve your water supply.
13. Large clearings are generally safe for your house, as well as your horse, during a fire. Note that the Fire Department judgment is 200 feet of clearance to bare earth around your property.
14. Fire travels extremely fast, sometimes at 100 mph and more. Lack of vegetation will not preclude the fire traveling across your land. Fire travels faster going up hill.
15. Fire creates its own wind. This can cause cinders to fly everywhere. Cinders can be blown long distances to seemingly protected areas where your horses may be.
16. Proper trimming and pruning of your trees, and clearing underneath will make a difference. Using fire retardant plants in landscaping will greatly minimize the air-borne cinders created during a firestorm.
17. Our local fire department points out that many trees that are not generally combustible, can frequently catch fire and burn simply because debris was allowed to

gather underneath. Debris can include manure and bedding that you may have used for mulch. Bedding in your corral and barn can also burn. Remove bedding, or remove the horse to a safer area.

Obtain a list of the most flammable plants in your local area from your local Fire Department.

18. In a **FIRE STORM**, close all windows, doors, and fireplace openings to seal your house. Remove drapes from windows. Do not turn on Air Conditioning. **STAY** inside and lie down on the floor away from windows. Your house will have an air supply to see you through the fire storm. Plan an escape route in case the building starts to burn. If the building starts to burn, immediately vacate.

19. Keep a list of emergency telephone numbers: fire, sheriff/police, Highway Patrol for road closures, veterinarian, and animal control services. Use the inside back cover of this booklet for these and other emergency telephone numbers.

NOTES:

## **Part 2 - WHAT ABOUT MY HORSE?**

*(See Chapter II on Horse Behavior)*

20. Examine your horse facility. Note what is NOT FLAMMABLE. You will quickly realize that most things burn - wood, plastic, paper, the thinner metals, aluminum, etc.

21. Do not store feed in your house or garage. It is possible that your home insurance could be negated by the storage of feed in improper places.

22. Feed burns! Alfalfa, oat and timothy hay, even pellets and grains - the drier, the faster it burns. Keep your feed and bedding away from structures. The fine dust from feed left on the floor is also flammable. Dispose of ruined feed immediately.

23. Hay stacks can become blazing infernos. Use a flame retardant cover over your stack, but if it catches fire—pull the stack apart.

24. Bedding, such as straw and wood shavings in stalls and corrals, is extremely flammable. Burning pieces can whip around in the wind and spread fire.

25. Horse manure burns! Store it in a safe place away from buildings, and have the pile removed often.

26. Cob webs (yes, spider webs) are FLAMMABLE and EXPLOSIVE, and will nurture a fire. Sweep cob webs from rafters, walls, and fixtures often.

27. Spontaneous combustion can happen where you store saddle cleaning materials (such as oily rags, saddle oil, kerosene). Store cleaning materials in sealed fire resistant containers.

28. Eaves on your buildings can attract fire if they are open. Roofs and rain gutters must be kept free of leaves, pine needles and other debris.

29. Since you cannot seal a barn like you can your home, be sure to follow the above suggestions to keep your barn as safe as possible.

30. Examine your horse fencing. Wood fencing burns, PVC fencing melts. They may not be safe in a fire. Consider the location of your property, and select the safest type of fencing for your animals. Do not count on an "electric hot wire" to contain your horse.

31. Use fire safe equipment for your horse. Nylon halters and ropes can melt into your horse's flesh. Use a leather halter and a cotton lead rope. Metal pieces on halters and leads can become burning hot. Don't use nylon or plastic blankets, sheets, fly masks, or leg wraps, as they also can melt.

32. **Be an aware owner.** Keep your horses **immunized** on a regular basis, and check with your veterinarian for his/her recommendations. Also consider immunizations against tetanus and rabies. Wild and non-domesticated animals are displaced during fires and floods, and exposure may occur to rabid skunks, raccoons, bats, etc.

33. Horses may panic and become wild with fear when they perceive danger. Horses that are in a panic state frequently will not leave the security of their stall or corral. Any barn can burn, and horses must be led out and placed in a secured area, or they may run back into the burning barn.

34. If you must tie your horse, be certain it is to a post firmly set. A frightened horse can rip a fence down, and if tied to a rail that becomes loose, the horse will panic further. Practice tying your horse for extended periods of time so it can be secured during a real emergency.

35. If you own a horse, you should also own a horse trailer and adequate tow vehicle to transport your animal. Always have at least a half tank of fuel. Keep your rig in top condition and have it serviced regularly (at least twice a year).

Practice loading and unloading your horse, even in the dark. Also practice hooking up the trailer to the tow vehicle in the dark.

If you do not own a horse trailer, you need to plan ahead of time for transportation for your horse. Plans should also include practice loading sessions for your horse, and



a destination for your horse in an emergency. Let friends and neighbors know about your plan.

In some cases, local Animal Control personnel, Fire Department or Sheriff Officer could request that owners lead their animals out of a dangerous area to keep the roads clear.

36. If you board your horse, make sure that the stable manager has an emergency plan. Go over the plan with the stable management. Use this booklet to help when you examine the boarding facility where you keep your horse.

37. Make sure that your horse has some sort of permanent identification, such as a freeze brand, micro chip implant, tattoo, etc., and keep photographs (winter and summer coat colors can be different) and copy of all your horse's identifiable features in a safe place.

38. Pack a Horse Evacuation Kit in a non-combustible container with all the equipment you will need. If possible, keep this evacuation kit in your horse trailer.

38. Fire Extinguisher (If you keep this extinguisher in your horse trailer, you will need to check its charge more often than extinguishers you keep on a wall at home or in the barn. The movement over roads in your trailer will cause the chemicals to condense. To continue the life of your fire extinguisher, tap it gently all around the sides and bottom with a rubber mallet at least twice a year. This will keep the chemical retardant in a proper state of suspension for use.)

Water bucket

Halter (Leather or Nylon)

Lead rope (12 foot cotton is best)

Equine medications & instructions

Identification papers/ photographs

for each horse

Feed instructions

50 foot cotton rope

Equine & Human first aid kits

Flashlight (*keep fresh batteries in a separate package.*)

Roll of Duct Tape

Permanent ink black sharp point marker pen

Cattle Marking Crayon

A change of clothing for you

Keep identification tags on your halters and lead ropes.

NOTES:

### Part 3 - DRINKING WATER

39. Water storage must be planned. Calculate how much water you will require to take care of human needs, fight the fire, and water your animals. Public water sources will probably be cut off. You will need to have water already stored in large tanks or barrels. Store water in several locations on your property, and secure the containers so they will not be damaged. Change the water in your storage containers at least four times a year to insure freshness. Rotate this water into your regular water usage to conserve it. Make sure that your water supply cannot become contaminated.

40. During earthquakes, floods, major hurricanes, tornadoes, and freezing weather, water mains and pipes can rupture, leaving you and your animals without water. Plan ahead for these contingencies by storing water in large tanks. In cold climates, you will need to consider purchasing a de-icer to keep water from freezing.

41. If you are unsure of the quality of the water, keep bottles of plain unscented household bleach in your emergency supplies to purify the water. For horses, use 1 ounce of bleach for each 20 gallons of water, and allow it to sit for at least 3 hours before using. As an alternative, water purification tablets are available from most camping supply stores. Follow the directions on the tablet container. Because of the chemical content, of water from your **swimming pool**, put the water in a container and leave it in full sunlight for 1-2 days before using it. The sunlight will remove the chemicals, and this water will then be safe for your horse to drink. You can also purchase a test kit for water purity.

42. Water for fire fighting: Different locations for water storage for fire protection need to be assessed. Expect to be on your own; unable to access public water sources. Plan and store accordingly. If you have your own private water storage system, remember that the higher your tank is the more water pressure you will have at your hose. With everyone else tapping into the local water supply, including the fire department, you may not have much water pressure. Don't forget the water in your swimming pool, if you have one. Purchase a gas powered pump, fire hose and nozzle for this important water source.

43. If your neighbor has an operating well, have you made arrangements to get water from them? Get written instructions on how to operate the well. Does anyone else in your household know how to operate the well?

44. Plan to have a back-up electrical power system to run the well pump.

45. For horses, you will need at least 20 gallons of water per horse per day. Make sure you have enough water for other pets, livestock and your family as well. Plan to store enough water for at least one week.

46. Contact your local Fire Department or Regional Emergency Response agency for emergency water drops if you have no stored water available.

## **Part 4 - FEED SUPPLIES**

47. Be sure you can store enough feed so that if you are cut off from deliveries you will still have at least a one week supply on hand. Determine how much feed and water you can safely store at a time. Make certain you have stored your feed in the safest place, usually away from the barn and your home. Place pelleted feed and grains in metal containers with secure lids.

48. Order your feed in bulk quantities, if safe storage is available.

49. If hay storage is outside, purchase a flame resistant tarp to cover the stack to protect it from flying embers. Also elevate the stack to minimize spoilage from water, mud, and rodents.

50. If your horse has a special diet or medications, don't forget to pack that special feed and medicine in case you must evacuate your horse. Also, don't forget to rotate this special feed and medicine as part of your evacuation kit.

51. Keep a feeding chart listing quantities of hay (type of hay – oat, alfalfa, timothy, orchard grass, Bermuda, etc.), water, and supplements for each horse, with an extra copy in your evacuation kit. Attach a small copy of this information to the horse if it is evacuated from your property by taping it to the halter. It will be very helpful to whoever may need to care for your horse at the evacuation sheltering site.

NOTES:

## Part 5 - FIRST AID

***This section is not intended to replace veterinarian care. It is essential that a veterinarian be consulted quickly when an animal's health is in question.***

52. First Aid supplies and knowing how to use them are essential. Most First Aid treatment for horses will be the same as for humans. Some First Aid treatments are listed in your telephone book.

53. See Chapter IV for First Aid Supplies. Keep a first aid kit handy in the house, at the barn, and in the horse trailer.

54. Have a list of veterinarians and make sure that the one you call will be able to reach your animals for treatment during the emergency. Consider the purchase of a layman's book on veterinary care. Become familiar with the portions in the book dealing with emergency treatment ahead of time.

55. Contact your veterinarian for information on burn treatment for horses before the emergency. Ask for a list of medications and instructions on how to apply them. Include these items in your first aid kits.

56. Arrange with one or more of your local veterinarians to provide a horse Emergency First Aid Clinic for you and your neighbors on a mutually convenient weekend.

57. After a fire has passed, watch for smoke inversion. Inversion is when smoke and other pollutants stay close to the ground. This can cause your horse severe distress. The respiratory systems of horses are delicate. Call your veterinarian for instructions on how to treat your horse if you suspect it is suffering from smoke inhalation.

58. If you suspect your horse is suffering shock, and the animal is not obviously burned, cover the animal with blankets and call your veterinarian for instructions.

59. Be prepared to treat for eye irritations (i.e. from smoke and flying cinders). Use an ear syringe to irrigate, or tie a wet compress securely to the horse's head, and call your veterinarian.

60. Take courses in First Aid and CPR. Renew these courses periodically. Your course certificate will tell you when to renew.

61. Contact your local agricultural college for available equine educational courses.

NOTES:

## Part 6 - IDENTIFICATION

62. Carry personal identification with you at all times with your current address. If you are away at work or on errands and emergency road blocks are set up, you will have to prove that you live in the emergency zone in order to gain admittance.

If Law Enforcement personnel will NOT allow you into your neighborhood, it is because the a state of emergency has been declared and the area is ordered closed to everyone. This is done for the safety of all persons including the Law Enforcement officers. Do not argue with them. They are doing their job.

63. Prior to any emergency, coordinate with your local Law Enforcement agencies to determine what criteria must be met in order to allow you to re-enter a previously evacuated area to remove livestock.

64. Have your personal identification, vehicle identification, trailer identification, and automobile insurance identification readily available.

65. Have current identification for each of your horses: Make certain you have photographs of you with each of your horses. Keep a copy in the barn and/or with your Horse Evacuation Kit. Have identification tags on each horse halter. Permanently mark your horse with non-alterable identification, like a freeze brand, micro-chip, or tattoo.

66. In the event that you need to evacuate your horse, proper identification is needed. Keep a cattle (livestock) crayon marker in your evacuation kit to write your name or telephone number on your horse over his hip. In case your horse's halter is removed or lost, by writing on your horse, you will be able to find it more easily at a sheltering center. Remember to put feed and medication notes on your horse's halter.

67. Keep up to date on all vaccinations and de-wormings. In an emergency your horse may be exposed to diseased horses. Keep a copy of each horse's health information with matching horse identification in barn and/or your Horse Evacuation Kit.

68. Indelibly label all of your equipment - halters, saddles, bridles, etc., with your name. Your address may also help. An identification kit may be available from the local police detachment.

69. Prior to evacuation, have forms prepared which will allow you to track who is removing the horse, the vehicle license number, and to what destination. If the proposed destination is not satisfactory, you may choose to delay the horse's removal.

## Part 7 - PREPARING YOURSELF AND YOUR NEIGHBORS

70. You, as the horse owner living in a rural area, need to be aware of trouble as it is starting. You should always be scanning the skies, listening and sniffing for smells that are not normal.
71. Assess the **CURRENT** conditions very carefully, and be aware that this may change rapidly. **Stay alert!**
72. Determine who in your family is most likely to be home at the time of an **EMERGENCY**, and which of your neighbors will probably be home during the day. Know who will be home at night. Be sure that your neighbors know when they can call on you for help. Exchange home telephone, cell, pager, and work numbers.
73. Purchase a generator and have a licensed electrician install it and show you how to use it. Determine beforehand what is essential in your home to have power for in an emergency, like a water well pump, refrigeration, stove, a few essential lights. Check the generator's operation at least twice a year.
74. Interface with your local Fire Department and Law Enforcement Community Relations Officers, and local Emergency Response Team (ERT). These departments will also assist you in preparing plans in your area for emergencies.
75. Have a **COMMUNITY PLAN**: Identify individuals who can handle your animals in the event you are not at home. Provide them with a means of access if your property is locked, and a liability release. Find a safe evacuation location for your animals if your property becomes unsafe. Is this location nearby? How far away? Have directions and a map ready to the evacuation site for the hauler. Make sure that a secure properly fitted halter with a lead rope is available for each horse. (See Chapter III.)
76. Know how many horses and other livestock are in your community, and where they are located. Assign block captains and provide them with emergency kits. (Minimum kit should contain a 50 foot cotton picket rope, duct tape, a cattle marking crayon, black permanent ink marking pen, street map of the area, and a flashlight.)
- Define key staging areas to facilitate evacuation of livestock. Work with local Fire and Law Enforcement people to ensure that areas you identify as staging areas will not already be in use by Fire or Law Enforcement needs.***
77. Network with other communities so that everyone is aware of all evacuation sites and the respective block captains.
78. Have volunteers ready to work (liaison) with the local Law Enforcement officers and Fire fighters to provide better communications between them and the horse owners.

79. If neighbors plan to bring horses to your property for safe keeping, check beforehand with your insurance company regarding your coverage and your potential liability.

80. Know who has a tractor and other heavy equipment available in your neighborhood.

81. Know who has a Citizen Band Radio in your neighborhood, or consider purchasing one for yourself. Regular telephone service is usually cut off during an emergency. Cell phones may or may not work. Get out that portable battery-operated radio, and tune in to your local emergency station.

82. Get an amateur radio operators license and encourage your neighbors to do the same. Most areas have HAM radio operator groups ready to function during emergencies.

83. Plan some kind of early warning system for your community.

NOTES:

# **HORSE BEHAVIOR and HORSE HANDLING IN AN EMERGENCY**

*When a horse feels threatened, its natural response is typically one of the following:*

- 1. Flight.**
- 2. Fight.**
- 3. Freeze**

REGARDLESS OF YOUR OWN HORSE-HANDLING ABILITIES, and what you believe your horse will do in a difficult situation—your horse can HURT YOU, HURT A BY-STANDER, DAMAGE PROPERTY, and even SELF-DESTRUCT!

A horse is a “conditioned response” animal. Therefore the more time spent in preparing the horse to deal with its emotions during a stressful situation, the better able it will be to successfully survive the emergency trauma. Information on horsemanship and how to accomplish this type of training is available from schools, clinics and professional trainers.

The following information is being shared by those who have experienced FIRE, FLOOD and EARTHQUAKE, so that you may be better prepared to handle your horse under stress.

## **Part 1 - HOW DO I SAVE MY HORSE?**

1. Your horse will react to your panic and fear. You must remain calm.
2. Train your horse to behave well BEFORE an emergency situation arises. Establish with your horse that the human is the herd leader.
3. Sedating your horse in an emergency is not always a good idea. Your horse may lose its natural instinct for self preservation. It may also lose balance and stability. For extreme cases, do have appropriate medication on hand purchased ahead of time from your veterinarian, and be prepared to administer this in the event sedation or tranquilization is needed. You are only allowed to administer medication to your own animals. Do not offer to administer medications to any one else's horse.
4. Not all emergencies occur in the daytime. Take your horse out at night. Horses see better at night than we do, but you will need to use flashlights around your horse so that he can become familiar with them. Have glo-sticks available in case flashlights don't work, and familiarize your horse with these also. Can you quickly find your horse halters in the dark? Keep at least one halter and lead rope per horse ready to use immediately. Practice putting them on quickly in the dark.



5. If you padlock your corrals, make certain your neighbors know the combination or have a key. Combination locks where you can set your own number series may be a better choice.
6. Make sure you can unlock your corrals in the dark. Keep a flashlight close by, and check batteries periodically. Or keep a supply of glo-sticks.
7. Do NOT turn your horse loose to fend for itself outside your property perimeter fence.
8. Know several methods of restraint and make sure you have the proper equipment to accomplish this. Practice restraint techniques before you really need to employ their use.
9. Learn various knots so you can safely tie a group of horses together, perhaps on a picket line.
10. Day Sheets, blankets fly masks and leg wraps easily catch fire, and must be removed from the horse if fire threatens.
11. Be prepared if you are riding out on a trail and a fire or other emergency threatens you. Think over carefully what supplies you should always carry with you (first aid kit, water, knife, halter and lead rope, cell phone, etc.). Pack a kit and faithfully carry it whenever you are out riding.

NOTES:

## Part 2 - LEAVE OR STAY?

***It will take longer than you think to load and transport or arrange for transport of your horses! Plan to leave early!***

12. With enough advance warning, you may choose to evacuate your horse. This decision should be done in a timely manner so as not to interfere later with emergency vehicles. You can severely hamper fire personnel and you can become a potential problem if you wait too long to evacuate.

The Fire Department is in charge of fighting the fire and determining which areas need to be evacuated ahead of the fire. If local Law Enforcement personnel come through your neighborhood because the Fire Department has requested an evacuation, it is because they value human life over property. It is strongly recommended, although not mandatory, that you heed their orders. With advance warning of flood, mudslide, blizzard or hurricane, it is best to move your horse to a safer location. If the emergency is earthquake or fire, and you are sure that you and your horse are in immediate danger, assess the situation carefully before you decide to evacuate. Be certain you are not moving into greater danger.

13. **Establish your escape route early.** Have alternate routes planned. Move far enough away from the fire or flood danger zone. Use extreme caution: Cars and trailers often get in the way of fire fighting equipment and hoses.

14. Try to move your horse to a safe area with which he may already be familiar.

15. Keep your truck and trailer hitched, facing the exit. Leave doors unlocked and the keys in the ignition, and keep a spare truck key in the horse area of your trailer or somewhere on the outside of the truck. Load your Horse Evacuation Kit, feed and water ahead of time. (Or: Keep properly sealed feed in the trailer - hay stored in a canvas or nylon bag, hay cubes or pellets in sealed paper bags. Rotate this feed monthly with your normal feed to keep it fresh.) Keep at least five gallons of fresh water in the trailer. Also in your trailer, keep an extra halter and lead rope, old horse blanket, leg wraps, picket line, and a change of clothes, bandannas, medicines, glasses, and shoes for yourself. You should also carry a shovel, an ax and a pair of heavy leather gloves.

16. **BE AWARE:** When hauling a horse trailer to remove your horse from danger, winds can INSTANTLY shift the fire into your path. You may not be able to turn around, and you may block or be blocked by emergency equipment and personnel.

17. If the fire is upon you, the Fire Department recommends **ONLY MOVE THE HORSE IF YOU ARE CERTAIN THAT DAMAGE OR INJURY WILL RESULT IF YOU STAY.** Consider the damage from smoke inhalation, not just burns from fire. Most important: stay calm and alert. Pay close attention to the fire conditions surrounding you.

18. **Loading Horses into a Trailer:** Trying to load a panicked horse into a trailer is risky and dangerous to you, the horse, others who are helping, and to property. Practice loading your horse at night with only the truck/trailer lights, and take a short drive. Do this activity as many times as necessary until you both feel comfortable with the process. Repeat this practice periodically.

19. **Safety check and service** your trailer at least twice a year. Pay particular attention to your tires. A tire which has been inactive for an extended period may have good tread, but be completely unserviceable. Change tires regularly, whether or not you think they need it. If you do not use your trailer often, check it monthly - flat tires don't go very far. Keep your towing vehicle's gas tank at least half full. Continue to practice hitching your trailer.

20. If you evacuate, leave plastic covered notes nailed to your barn door and house door indicating if there are any animals on the premises. Rescue and disaster personnel will look for people and animals by going door to door after a mandatory evacuation. They may simply leave food in a safe location for animals left behind, if they know no one is home to care for the animals.

NOTES:

### **Part 3 - WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO MY HORSE IF I MOVE HIM?**

21. The local Animal Regulation Department has evacuation centers with a limited holding period. Know the closest evacuation center to your property. List alternate locations in case an extended emergency exists. Keep a list of locations in your evacuation kit, which should include neighbors across town, the fairgrounds, or other designated areas such as stables, racetracks, private farms, stockyard companies, rodeo arenas, show grounds, local educational institutions, etc.

22. It is stressful for the horse to be moved from its familiar surroundings, but if there is smoke, flying cinders, and commotion, it may be best to evacuate.

23. If you have to move your horse to a new area or a sheltering site, be sure to take some of his regular feed with you. A change in feed material can make your horse sick, especially in a stressful situation. Be sure to leave information about feed and medications, and ask the shelter manager if you may come to care for your horse(s).

24. Accustom your horse to drinking from different or strange water buckets. Try using a collapsible bucket, too. If your horse won't drink the local water, add flavoring to horse's water (7-UP, popsicles, Hawaiian punch, apple cider vinegar, etc.) periodically to accustom them to drinking the local water in different areas.

25. When horses feel they are in a safe area, they generally remain calm. You must remain calm also.

26. Remember that horses are HERD animals. What the herd leader does - all the horses will copy. A new horse added to a group already penned may cause more stress to all the animals in the pen. Keep stallions separate from all other horses. Mares with foals need to be kept away from other horses and given special attention.

27. Quarreling horses can be distracted by placing feed in several different areas.

28. Get your horse on his normal routine as quickly as possible to avoid more stress.

NOTES:

#### **Part 4 - THE BARN AND CORRAL ARE ON FIRE!**

29. If your barn is on fire, you must remove the horse. The horse cannot escape, and indeed may freeze and be unable to move. Great care must be taken in removing a horse from a burning barn. Do NOT open the door and expect the horse to run out. Horses frequently run INTO a burning barn, because that is where the horse felt safest. See Chapter II, Horse Behavior, page 17.

30. If your horse's feet are planted firmly on the ground and he will not easily move forward, move him sideways a step or two to get his feet moving. Then take a step or two toward the exit. Do not rush the process. Too much pressure, too soon, may cause the horse to react explosively.

31. If you need to remove a horse from a burning building or corral, you need to blindfold the animal - know how to do so safely. Practice is the key. Use a large DRY cotton towel, and tuck it under the halter and over the horse's eyes.

32. Dry bandannas or other cotton fabric make a good temporary smoke mask to place over a horse's nostrils. Tie them onto the halter. Remove mask as soon as possible.

33. In a fire, wet the manes and tails of your horses, and perhaps your own hair and clothing, or cover them with large wet towels. Be prepared to continue wetting down after the fire passes, depending on the amount of air-borne fire particles are blowing around you. **CAUTION:** Wet clothing, towels, bandanas, etc., can produce steam, which if inhaled can cause damage to lungs.

34. Synthetic and nylon halters can melt and burn your horse. Don't use them if fire is surrounding you! It is best to have a leather halter, and a cotton lead rope. Remove blankets, leg wraps, and fly masks. They catch fire easily.

35. Consider using a stud chain for better control. Practice using a stud chain so you know how to attach and use it safely.

36. Intense heat and dehydration can kill your horse. Smoke inhalation generally causes pneumonia, which if untreated can cause death. Discuss with your veterinarian the length of time a horse can be exposed to smoke without harm.

NOTES:

*He's up to his belly in water or mud –*

## Part 5 – FLOOD\*, EARTHQUAKE, HURRICANE, TORNADO

### - *the ground is still shaking!*

37. Many animals die as a result from drowning, being trapped in submerged objects (barns, etc.), and from pneumonia, wounds, hypothermia and shock sustained during flooding. Again, it is recommended you review your own situation with regard to your proximity to waterways, creeks, rivers, drainage areas, etc.

38. Even though an area has never flooded, you should still consider the worse case scenario for your location. An important part of preparing your horse area for potential flooding is to prevent water accumulation by enhancing drainage. In addition, add rock to paddocks to raise low spots prior to the rains. Consider creating a high area such as a central mound in your corrals or paddocks for horses to move out of low water filled areas to higher ground.

39. If you live where flash floods or overflow water may rapidly enter your property, determine what is necessary for immediate evacuation. Next, consider the situation where your property is under one to three feet of water and you do not evacuate. Plan for being without drinking water, power, gas, roads or communications. Remember you may have to care for your animals in the dark.

40. When you receive warning of impending flooding, evacuate to a non-flood risk area as soon as possible. Don't feel you are jumping the gun by loading your horses and hauling them to neighbors across town or to the fairgrounds or to other designated areas (stables, racetracks, private farms, stockyard companies, rodeo arenas, show grounds, local educational institutions, etc.). You are avoiding becoming a problem for emergency personnel, which would occur if you stayed too long, then tried unsuccessfully to evacuate.

41. Except for flash floods, horses can usually handle a moderate amount of water up to their bellies for a long period of time. They will need to be fed where they are and can keep warm by eating hay.

42. Some limb swelling will occur with prolonged water contact, but, in general, horses in most regions of California can handle their limbs submerged for 48 to 72 hours. Obviously, move the animals to high ground once the situation stabilizes. If they cannot be moved safely, provide food and clean water if possible and wait for the water to recede.

**Mud** becomes the big enemy for stranded horses. It is a very serious life threatening situation. They can become trapped and unable to move or fracture a limb maneuvering in deep, thick, sticky mud. Eye injuries may occur from horses pulling themselves out of mud and hitting adjacent stalls, fencing or other objects.

---

*\*The section of this Booklet concerning Flooding was expanded by John E. Madigan, DVM, Dipl. ACVIM and head UC Davis Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital Rescue and Disaster Response Team, with permission as published in "The Horse Report," Volume 15, Number 4, December 1997.*

43. If your horse is trapped in mud, you will need to call the local Fire Department, Animal Control Department, and your veterinarian for help.

44. Water borne illnesses for horses can cause liver and kidney problems and abortions, gastrointestinal infections from contaminated water, and toxics ingestion or exposure. Wounds, especially of the legs, and aspiration pneumonia are also serious problems. Keep leg wraps and antibiotics prescribed by your veterinarian available.

45. Some horses are not as threatened by **Earthquakes**, but they are usually aware of them before humans. They will quite often stop what they are doing and remain still. When the earth starts rumbling, they may become agitated. Be prepared for abnormal behavior following aftershocks. Some horses will leap and run around blindly. Others may become aggressive and out of control. Often they can be soothed and distracted by feeding them. Provide attention and reestablish a routine as quickly as possible.

46. Check the security of your fences. Extensive flooding or shaking can loosen fence posts and leave your horse unsecured. Promptly remove debris from any area containing a horse.

47. Before a **Hurricane or Tornado**, it is probably best to evacuate your horse, especially if you live in an urban area where flying debris cannot be avoided. Remember that high winds make projectiles out of the most innocent items, like potted plants, firewood, patio furniture, bicycles, etc.

48. Check buildings for soundness and for sharp edges after an earthquake, tornado, hurricane, or other emergency. Look for downed or disconnected power lines, broken water, sewer, and gas lines, and notify the proper authorities.

49. In freezing weather, protect horses from wetness and wind that will rob them of the natural protection offered by their winter hair coat. Provide shelter in some form. It is not always wise to put a blanket on a wet horse. Horses can stay warm by eating nourishing meals of high quality hay, which will provide the calories they need to maintain their body temperature. Also provide plenty of defrosted fresh water. Break ice on water tanks, or install a de-icer.

NOTES:

## **Part 6 - HELPERS & HINDERERS**

50. With all good intentions - sometimes we rush to interfere when we shouldn't. Assess the situation very carefully before taking action. Be aware of your personal liability.
51. Horses cannot cope with being trapped, whether by other horses or by people.
52. Many horses will run over people when they feel trapped.
53. Volunteers, even experienced horse owners, often can be injured when handling strange horses.
54. If the horse has panicked - you will have a very difficult time controlling him. Recover the horse's attention first.
55. Horses are survivors. They are strong. They follow their instincts. They often survive on their own.
56. The moment may come when your life is in peril - Let go of the horse, and save your own life.

NOTES:



## Chapter III

# COMMUNITY PLAN ACTIVITIES

Have local Fire and Law Enforcement agencies hold general neighborhood planning meeting.

- Have local Red Cross/First Aid personnel hold first aid and CPR classes.
- Have a local veterinarian(s) give an emergency first aid treatment clinic.
- Have your local Fire Department hold Emergency Response training.
- Gated communities generally issue identification cards and/or access stickers for vehicles, and may be necessary for passing through emergency road blocks, **but** these community-type cards and stickers must be pre-qualified with local Law Enforcement officials.
- Neighborhood fund raiser: Make up first aid kits for sale, including glo-sticks, a test kit for water purity, I.D. tags, and other horse related items.
- Create a neighborhood map and list of horse owners; each residence address; Email address; home, work, cell and pager phone numbers; number of animals, type of facility, type of fencing, arenas or large paddocks available in an emergency to use as possible staging areas for evacuation of large animals. Consider liability issues for such staging areas.
- Identify geographical areas on a map: who has a safer location in an emergency? Who has water (wells)? Generator? Gasoline powered pump?
- Determine who has equipment available: Tractor, 4-wheel drive vehicles, C.B. and Ham radios, feed (amount stored), wells for water, water purification, portable telephones and AM radios.
- Get as many people as possible qualified with Ham radio licenses and formulate a Disaster Communications System (DCS).
- Generate your own emergency Equine Response Team (E.R.T.) with qualified and equipped "Responders" through your local municipality.
- Practice a "HORSE FIRE DRILL" with your neighbors.

## Chapter IV

# FIRST AID SUPPLIES

***Disclaimer: All items listed on the following pages as First Aid Supplies are intended for your personal use. You should never supply any medication to other people or their animals; advise them that you are not a medical doctor or a veterinarian, and that they must take full responsibility for the ingestion or topical use of any of the following materials.***

*Any brand names used in the following lists are for clarification, not endorsement.  
Know how to use each item or product.*

### SMALL KIT TO TAKE ANY PLACE

√

- \_\_\_\_\_ Band-Aids, assorted sizes, 6 each.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sterile gauze pads, 4x4-inch size.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gauze roller bandages, 2 rolls, 3- & 4-inch widths.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adhesive tape, two rolls, 1- & 2-inch widths.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ace bandages, 2 rolls.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A bandanna to use as a sling.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bandage scissors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Safety pins.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Alcohol towelettes in individual packets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Desitin ointment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Neosporin ointment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Americaine spray, small aerosol.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Aspirin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Visine or Murine eye drops.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sunscreen for skin and lips (use on your horse, too).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Insect repellent, spray on or wipe on.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tissues and Handi-Wipes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Water in a sterile plastic pouch.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pocket knife & hoof pick.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cotton lead rope.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whistle & matches in water proof container.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Flashlight and glo-sticks.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shoe laces for instant tack repairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hoof boot.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Food: Simple sugars (like a granola bar), and complex carbohydrates-protein (peanut butter protein bar).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pen or pencil & small note pad.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Quarters for telephone or calling card number.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identification including your physician and veterinarian.
- \_\_\_\_\_ First Aid Booklet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Leatherman type pocket tool.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thermometer, human and horse type.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plain water, at least one liter, for drinking.

### ADD TO THE ABOVE FOR YOUR BARN &/OR HORSE TRAILER

#### Dressings & Bandages:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Adhesive dressings, assorted sizes, 6 of each.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Butterfly closure tapes, 6, for pulling edges of cut together.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-stick sterile pads, 2x4 inches (Telfa pads, 6 each).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adhesive tape or non-allergic tape (3 rolls, 2 each of 1, 2 & 3 inches wide).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-moistened antiseptic towelettes (4-6).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gauze roller bandages (3 rolls, 2-, 3-; & 4-inches).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Self-adhesive elastic bandages (1 or 2 rolls, 3-, or 4-inch).

- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-adhesive elastic bandaging, or Vetwrap (3 rolls, 4-inch).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ One triangular bandage or bandanna.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Handi-Wipes (great for cleansing, or can be used as absorbent bandage, or to tie a splint in place).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Disposable diapers (2, makes an absorbent dressing with a waterproof backing).
- Small and large cotton towels.

### **Instruments & Other Supplies:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Tweezers, or pen knife with tweezers, scissors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eye dropper or ear bulb syringe (for eye or wound irrigation).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stethoscope.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Safety pins (6 large, to fasten sling or bandages).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tourniquet (rubber, to control bleeding).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wooden tongue blades or depressors (padded for convulsive seizures or unpadded for spreading ointment).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plastic bottle with tapered nozzle and cap (for drinking water or eye or wound irrigation).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Canteen for water or Water Purification tablets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cord or nylon rope.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wire Cutters.

### **Medicines (Topical or Local):**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Antiseptic scrub, a cleansing solution for wounds. Rinse thoroughly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Topical antibacterial powder for wounds and sores.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Antibiotic ointment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Anesthetic ointments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Anesthetic topical aerosols.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rubbing Alcohol
- \_\_\_\_\_ Horse liniment or witch hazel for strains, sprains or bruises.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Epsom salts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Swat ointment, for fly repel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bee sting kit, if allergic to bees.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Saline solution for irrigating.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sterile eye wash
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ice, if possible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Instant cold packs.