

HORSE COUNCIL  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS GUIDELINES FOR HORSE OWNERS



*"Horse Council BC gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport"*

## **Plan, Plan, and Plan! Failure to plan is planning to fail**

This old saying could not be truer when it comes to disaster preparedness and horse owners. In British Columbia there is not a government or disaster agency responsible for the evacuation, transportation and temporary stabling of horses during large-scale incidents. This makes horse owners completely responsible for taking care of their horses. In the case of impending floods, horse owners may have advance notice, so are thereby even more responsible for pre-planning. Horse Council BC has developed this set of guidelines to help horse owners prepare for the worst. When a flood, earthquake, fire or man-made emergency strikes, the steps you've taken ahead of time to protect the safety and well being of your animals can mean the difference between life and death.

It is impossible to cover all situations, and the recommendations covered here may not be suitable for all situations. The information herein is drawn from experiences with Hurricane Andrew, the Winnipeg floods and other major disasters.

These general guidelines are recommendations intended to help the horse owner prepare for most disasters. It is only intended for use with horses. Your personal preparedness for yourself, your family and your home is not covered in this publication

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## Long Range Planning

- Familiarize yourself with the types of disasters that could occur in your area. Develop a written plan of action for each. Keep the plan with your important papers. Review the Disaster Plan regularly with everyone involved. Post emergency numbers in a visible location in the stable or barn.
- Survey your property for the best location for animal confinement for each type of disaster. Identify food and water sources that do not rely on electricity which could be lost during an emergency.
- Decide where to take the horses if evacuation becomes necessary.
- Photograph the left and right sides of each horse as well as its face and medial and lateral lower legs. Also take a photo of your horse and make sure you are in the picture. This will help with identifying the horse when picking it up from evacuation. Record its breed, sex, age and color. Keep copies with important papers. As an option you can permanently identify your horses by tattoo, brand or microchip. Temporary identification by tags on the fetlocks and halters, painted or etched hooves, or even clipping an ID number onto the horse are also options.
- Have all your horses records (registration papers, worming, breeding, shots, insurance papers) written down and copied. Keep copies with your important papers as well as with your disaster plan. Put one set in a zip-lock bag. (More on this further in guideline.) You can also keep this information on your computer. Back up the disks and put in the zip-lock bag, as well as with your important papers.
- Keep vaccinations and boosters up to date. Record the dates, dosages and types of medications/health products the animal receives. Record dosages and dietary requirements. Keep copies of this with your important papers and separate disaster plan.
- If you own a horse trailer or van, make sure it is insured and in good condition. Check it for safety. Make sure that the truck you will tow it with is also insured and in good running order. Keep the gas tank full and even keep spare gas on hand.
- Make sure your horse will load! Practice, Practice and then practice some more. The trailer will do no good if you can't get the horse in.
- Maintain a stockpile of hay and grain. Keep extra medications and veterinary supplies on hand. Consider keeping tranquilizers on hand should a horse become panicked during a crisis; ask your veterinarian what is available. Research what you are capable and allowed to administer.

## Advanced Planning

- Have a halter and lead rope designated for EACH horse and hang it on the wall outside its stall or on the paddock gates.
- Gather and keep extra feed buckets at your barn. These can be sent with the horse when evacuated.
- Start to stockpile at least three or more days of feed and hay. Stockpile medications and supplements. Store extra water in large containers, like rubber garbage bins.
- Keep food and medications in an airtight, waterproof container. Rotate this once every three months.
- Keep extra bedding on hand.
- Find extra pitchforks and shovels and keep them on hand. If space allows an extra wheelbarrow may come in handy.
- Make and keep some sort of ID tags handy for your horses. Luggage tags are handy. These can be attached to the halters or manes and tails. Keep these with your disaster preparedness kit.
- Clearly identify for volunteers which horses should be evacuated first, in the event that all animals cannot be moved. Make sure all personnel are aware of your wishes.
- Compile a portable First Aid Kit. Keep this with your disaster preparedness kit.
- Obtain a map of your area and the area you will evacuate your horse to. Familiarize yourself with the area that the evacuation barn is in. Learn the routes. Keep this map with you disaster preparedness kit. Check out the barn you hope to evacuate to in order to make sure that it is suitable.
- Write down all the emergency phone numbers; put this in your disaster preparedness kit.
- Check to make sure all your advance preplanning is still valid.

### Notes:

## Prior to Evacuation

- Get a Zip-lock bag and put in the copies of your horses registration papers, insurance papers, the photographs you have taken, copies of the Identification papers (copies in this guideline), Fill out an index card with your name, address, horses name and description and your vet's name and phone number. Also add any feeding instructions and special needs. Wrap this around the horse's halter with duct tape. Do not put original registration papers in the bag. Write "copy" across the papers. Remember, during an emergency everyone is not honest.
- Put luggage (or similar type) tags with the same information as on index card and braid it into the horse's mane. Do the same in the tail. Do not tie around the tail.
- If your horse is not permanently identified with a microchip or brand, now may be the time to use small animal clippers and clip your phone number onto your horse's neck. Spray paint or etch the hooves. If your horse is being trailered by someone other than you to the evacuation site, an ID number may be drawn onto the horse with an Auction crayon.
- Pack into your trailer, or put aside, all the extra buckets, feed and hay that you have stockpiled for your horses evacuation. Don't forget the portable first aid kit.
- Transport or prepare to transport your horse to a safe evacuation site. It is best to do this before it is an emergency, even several days in advance. **Do not wait until the last minute to remove your animals.**
- Write down and keep in a safe place, the address of where your horse has been evacuated.
- If you are unable or unwilling to remove your horse, make sure all the preparations to keep them on the property are in place. Make sure that someone knows you are on the property and have your horse with you.
- If you are staying with your horse on the property, take two plywood boards and spray paint on one side of the board "Have Horses, need help!", On the other side of the board, spray paint "Have horses, OK for now". Keep these in the barn or near the house. Use them to keep rescue and emergency personnel informed should communication line be severed.

### Notes:

## **Portable Veterinary Supply Kit (keep in waterproof container)**

Cotton  
Bandages  
Thermometer  
Scissors  
Vet wrap  
Poultice  
Surgical soap  
Fly Spray  
Electrolytes  
Iodine  
Wound Ointment  
Peroxide  
Gauze pads  
Vaseline  
Extra supply of special Medicines  
Veterinarian's name and telephone number  
Emergency contact  
Horses Dietary needs

### **Notes:**

## **Zip-Lock Horse ID Bag (to be attached to horses halter)**

Photograph of horse right and left sides, face, legs.

Photograph of horse and owner

Copies of registration papers

Veterinary records

Index card with owner's name, address, telephone number, feeding instructions, horse's name and description. Back up computer disks can also be put in here.

Insurance documents for the horse (if insured)

Duct tape to attach bag to halter.

Emergency Evacuation Transport documentation papers (signed by owner and volunteer transport person) these will be filled out and signed at the time the horse is being evacuated.

Filled out Evacuation ID papers

Veterinarian's name and telephone number

### **Notes:**

## **Personal Emergency Kit**

- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Portable radio with extra batteries
- Wire cutters
- First aid kit for humans
- Tool kit with hammer, nails, saw, screws etc.
- Chain saw
- Tarps
- Plywood and spray paint
- Axe
- Matches
- Gasoline
- 2 liter pop bottles (full of frozen water)
- Bleach
- Cell phone
- Sharp knife
- Maps
- Vet's name and telephone number
- Emergency phone numbers (Fire, Police, Ambulance)
- Ropes
- Blankets

## **Notes:**

## **Feed and Supply Kit**

At least 3 days supply of grain in airtight container  
At least 3 days supply of hay in garbage/plastic bags  
At least 3 day supply of special feed supplements  
Portable water containers  
Wheelbarrow  
Pitchfork  
Shovels  
Bagged shavings  
Horse Blankets  
Leather Halter

### **Notes:**

## **Emergency Disaster Kit**

Copies of everything in the Zip-Lock ID bag  
First Aid kit  
Personal Emergency Kit  
Feed and Supply Kit  
Written Plan of Action

### **Notes:**

# Equine Evacuation Documentation Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Horses Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description;** (also please fill out form below) \_\_\_\_\_

Owners Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Owners Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Owners Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Owners Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Horse Picked up from: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Location Horse Delivered to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Transporters Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Receiving Stable Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Was Owner Present for Transport? Yes/No

Was Owner Present for Delivery? Yes/No

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## Horse Identification Form

**Outline white or black markings, note colors, scars, tattoos or brands**

Horses Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Registration # \_\_\_\_\_

Microchip: (yes/no) \_\_\_\_\_ Tattoo: \_\_\_\_\_ Scars or Marks: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Brand: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# Horse Identification Form

Outline white or black markings, note colors, scars, tattoos or brands

Horses Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Micro Chip; (yes/no) \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Brand: \_\_\_\_\_

Tattoo: \_\_\_\_\_ Scars or Marks: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

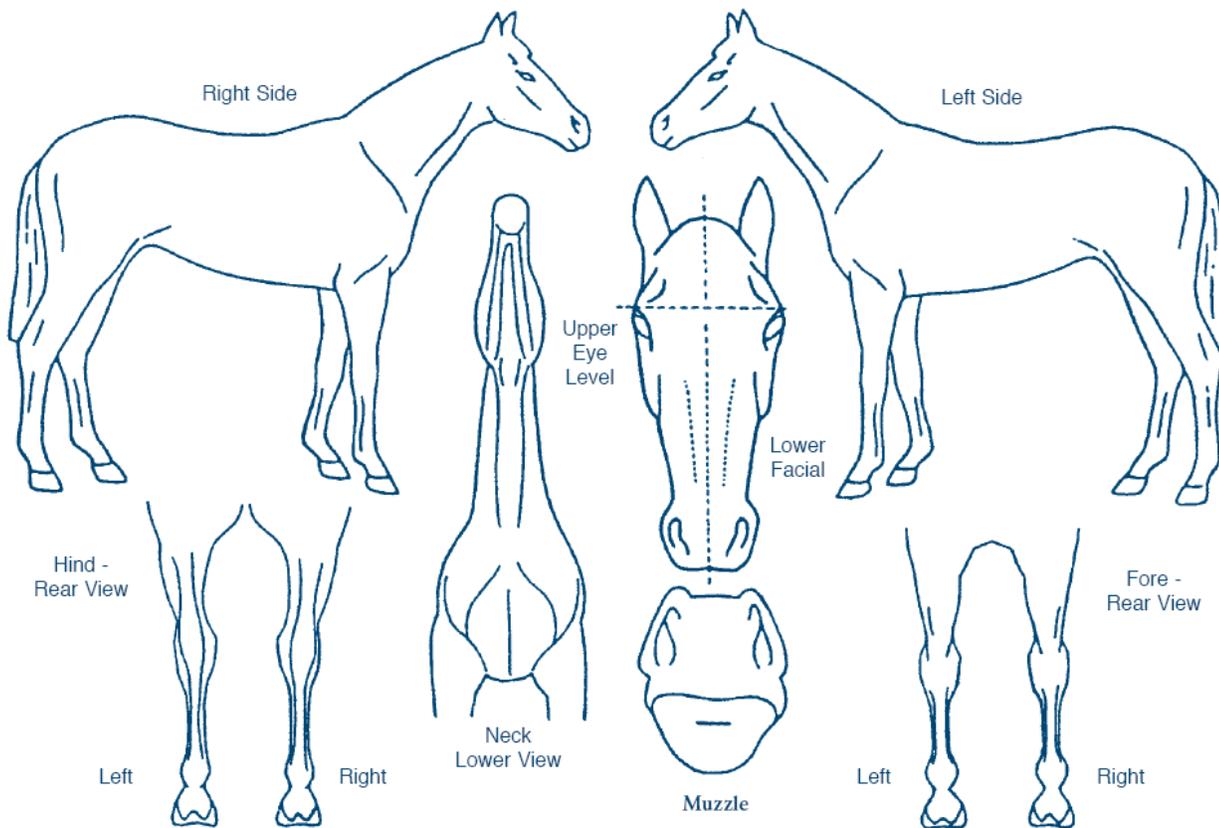
Veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Owners name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE DRAW ALL WHITE MARKINGS AND PUT "X" WHERE COWLICKS APPEAR**



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