

## Before A Disaster Strikes

- Learn what types of disasters can occur in your area (wildfires, barn fires, floods, earthquakes, hazardous materials spills, etc.).
- Prepare a plan of action and/or evacuation for each type of emergency. Each situation will require different methods of preparation, evacuation and sheltering.
- Make sure trailers and trucks are maintained, fueled and ready to go at all times.
- Put together a disaster kit, including water, food, equipment, and tools. Store it in an easily accessible place; for emergency use only.
- Permanently identify each horse with a tattoo, brand, microchip or tag. Take identification photos of each horse (head, side, front and back views). Keep a copy of current medical records as well as a description of each horse.
- Organize your neighbors to watch out for and help each other. Develop and practice a neighborhood watch and evacuation plan. Designate someone to care for your horses if you are away.



## Preparing Your Farm and Property

**Your first priority is human safety.  
If you are injured, who will help your animals?**

- **Make a diagram** of your barn and property, locating the following:
  1. all exits
  2. location and shut-off points for water, gas and electricity
  3. location of stored emergency supplies
  4. location of fire-fighting equipment
  5. location of "safety zones" and trailers
- Post this diagram at each entrance and in all tack and feed rooms, as well as a list of emergency phone numbers.
- **Identify alternative water sources** on your property: storage tanks, running creeks and streams, and water troughs.
  - In a barn fire**, much of your available water will be used to fight the blaze.
  - In an earthquake**, water lines can be broken.
  - In a flood**, water can become contaminated and unsafe to drink.
- **Buy large storage tanks** to keep extra water. Each horse will need 5-10 gallons per day. Count on being self-sufficient for at least one week.
- **Designate "safe areas"** to confine horses in each type of disaster. In a wildfire or flood, your entire farm may be threatened, so you'll need to choose an alternate area several miles away in case you must evacuate. Contact local stables, fairgrounds and racetracks for availability of emergency shelter.
- **Identify at least two escape routes** from your property.
- **Consider purchasing a gas-powered generator** to run water pumps, lights and emergency equipment.

## Preparing Your Barn

Keep a disaster kit in a covered container.

Use only in an emergency. Include at least the following:

- food and water for several days
- cotton halters and leads
- flashlight and portable radio
- ID photo and medical records
- first aid kit and book
- buckets and tools

### Fire Fighting Supplies

- fire extinguishers
- shovel and rake
- ladder
- long hoses and buckets

### Reduce fire hazards in and around your barn.

- Enforce your "No Smoking" rule.
- Store gasoline, paints, solvents and other flammables in a separate area.
- Store hay, straw, shavings, manure, jumps and other wood away from barn.
- Clear vegetation around all buildings (within 50 feet), prune overhanging trees.
- Clean gutters and roofs regularly.

### Inform all boarders, neighbors and employees of safety rules and evacuation plans.

- Hold disaster drills and practice emergency procedures.
- Familiarize everyone with handling procedures for horses with special needs (stallions, pregnant mares, etc.).

### Work with your Fire Department and Sheriff's Department to develop an appropriate and effective emergency plan.

- They are often willing to make yearly inspections of fire extinguishers and storage of combustibles.

Have all employees trained in first aid and CPR.

## Handling Your Horse During an Evacuation

- **Stay calm and follow your emergency plans.**

Horses in danger can panic and be difficult to handle.

- **Be prepared to evacuate at the first sign of an emergency.** Trailers can be hard to maneuver on narrow roads. Avoid the last-minute panic that only serves to jam roads and block emergency vehicles.

- **Listen to your radio for news and announcements of temporary housing for animals.**

- **Prepare your horse for emergency procedures:**

Practice loading in a trailer quickly and calmly.

Accustom your horse to seeing you in a raincoat and bandanna mask.

Practice different methods of restraint as well as blindfolding your horse.

- **In a fire, blindfold horse** with a wet towel or rag, cover the horse's nostrils with a wet cloth and wet his/her mane and tail. Use a cotton or leather halter - nylon will melt and cause burns! Do not blanket your horse as it may catch fire.

- **Close barn doors after evacuating and securing horses.** Horses in a panic will often not leave their stall or corral, or may try to return to a burning barn.

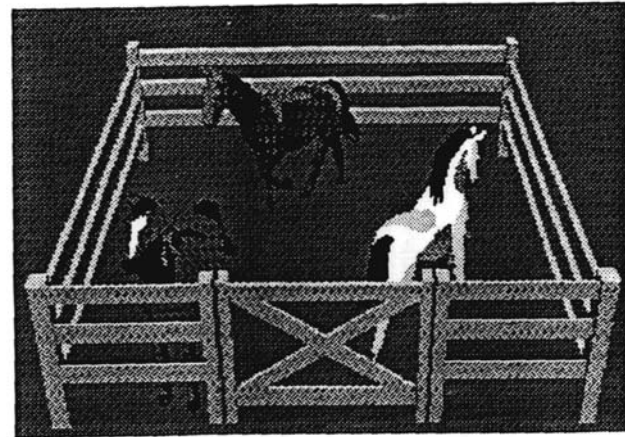
- **When evacuating large numbers of horses,** take advantage of their herd instincts. Lead one and the others will follow.

- **Do not sedate your horse.** His/her sense of self-preservation will be impaired.

- **Have identification on each horse.** Write your name and phone number on halters and blankets and/or paint your driver license number or phone number on your horse's side.

## If You Must Leave Your Horse(s) Behind:

- Remove horses from the barn and close the doors. Horses will return to the barn for security and could be trapped inside.
- Make sure your horse is secured in a corral or pasture with no barbed wire.
- Secure all gates, but do not lock them in case horses must be evacuated by rescuers.



- Do not let your horse loose to fend for itself, unless your property is enclosed. Loose animals on the road can be injured and create a hazard for evacuating motorists.
- Leave enough water and food (hay, not grain) for 48 hours in non-spill containers.
- Leave extra food in a safe place accessible to rescuers but not to horses.
- Return to check on your horses as soon as emergency relief workers deem it safe.