



EQUINE

Emergency Preparedness

Develop Your Individual **DISASTER PLAN**

Animal owners, and especially owners of horses and livestock, must rely on themselves to take care of their animals in a disaster. Make sure your emergency plan includes the following 10 points:

1 IDENTIFICATION

The goal of permanent identification for your animals is reunification in the event you become separated during a disaster. Permanently identify each horse by a method such as microchipping. This should be done by a veterinarian and the paperwork sent in to register the identity. NOTE: the microchip is useless without the registration. Other humane methods of identification include an **ID tag** attached to the horse's halter or a **plastic neckband** engraved or marked with information. At the time of evacuation, consider additional temporary identification such as a **leg band**. In a pinch, you can spray paint your name and phone number on the horse.



Also, take several **full-frame** and **close-up photographs** with detailed descriptions for each horse you own. Record breed, color, size, markings, scars, cowlicks or whorls, and other significant features. Keep copies in a sealed plastic ziplock bag and store it in a safe place. Send a copy to a friend or family member so that the information is preserved in case of fire, or keep a copy in digital form on a cloud server for access from a phone or other mobile device.

2 HALTERS AND LEAD ROPES



Keep halters and lead ropes ready for your horses. On each halter attach a **luggage tag** with the following information: the horse's name, your name, email address, your telephone number, and another emergency telephone number where someone can be reached.

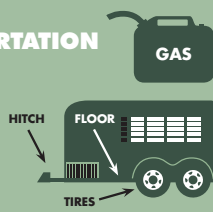
3 MEDICAL RECORDS AND PHOTOS

Place your horses' Coggins tests, veterinary papers, identification photographs, and **vital information**—such as medical history, allergies, and emergency telephone numbers (veterinarian, family members, etc.)—in a watertight plastic bag. Store the bag with your other important papers in a safe place that will be easy for you to access and take with you when you and your horses evacuate. An old backpack makes a useful storage container for "grab and go".



4 TRANSPORTATION

If you have your own **horse trailer**, keep it road ready by checking the tires, floors and hitch frequently. Make sure your truck is in good working order and that the gas tank is at least half full. If you don't have a horse trailer, make arrangements to have your horse trailered in an emergency. If you can, have several reliable people who could help with transportation in case one person can't help.



5 DO YOUR HORSES KNOW HOW TO LOAD AND UNLOAD?

It is vital that your horses are comfortable being loaded into and unloaded from a trailer. A stressful situation will only add to any existing loading issues. If your horses have not been trained to load and unload, **train or have them trained** and practice the procedure so they become used to it. A major problem in the San Diego County wildfires were horses (and mules) who were not trailer-trained, making it impossible to transport them to safety. As a result, some were left behind.



6 EVACUATION SITES/REFUGE



Know where you can take your horses in an emergency evacuation. Identify at least two (2) exit routes and a **prearranged destination**. If possible, make arrangements with a friend or another horse owner to stable your horses in a safe zone. Contact your local animal control agency or local emergency management authorities for information about shelters in your area. During mandatory evacuations, shelter sites for animals will be identified by the Office of Emergency Services.

7 BACK-UP PLAN

Have a back-up plan in case it's impossible to take your horse with you when you evacuate. Consider different types of disasters and whether your horses would be better off **in a barn or loose in a field**. Your local humane organization or emergency management agency should be able to provide you with information about your community's disaster response plans.



8 COMMUNICATE YOUR PLAN

Share your evacuation plan with friends and neighbors. **Post detailed instructions** in several places—including the barn office or tack room, the horse trailer, and barn entrances—to ensure emergency workers can see them in case you are not able to evacuate your horses yourself.



9 EVACUATE SOONER RATHER THAN LATER

Evacuate early, even before there is an official evacuation order. If you wait until the last minute to evacuate, emergency management officials may tell you that you must leave your horses behind. In this case, your horses could be unattended for days without care, food, or water.



10 SUPPLIES

Have fresh water and hay available for **72 hours**. Don't forget the water buckets. Prepare a basic **first aid kit** that is portable and easily accessible to bring with you for your horses. Also, prepare an emergency kit that includes water buckets, tarps, leg wraps, knife, scissors and wire cutters. (See <http://cal-cares.com/personal-family> for what to include in an emergency kit.)

