



HURRICANE EQUINE EVACUATION

*Prepared by the AAEP Emergency & Disaster
Preparedness Committee*

Head for the hills! When hurricane winds blow along the gulf and eastern shores of the United States, horse owners must decide whether to “shelter in place” or load horses, gear, and pretty much everything but the kitchen sink, and head inland, away from the greatest storm danger.

If you plan to evacuate with your horse, there are a number of web sites and contacts to help you. If at all possible, making these contacts well in advance of the emergency will make the trip much easier. Leave early in a voluntary evacuation period. If you wait too late, you may be stuck in traffic or not allowed on the road once winds reach a certain velocity. If you must make a last-minute search for shelter/stabling, consider some of the following as you make calls and prepare to move out:

- Have proof of ownership and individual identification of your horse.
- Be sure to describe your horse (stallion, mare, young unbroken, mare with foal) in terms that make special needs clear.
- Discuss fencing and stabling type—what is your horse used to living in and will he be safe in different/unusual type facility.
- If pasture/paddock with other horses, realize additional risk of injury in turning horses in with new “buddies”.
- Ask about health status: Know what vaccines/worming your horse has received in relation to the general status of horses being accepted at the stable. There is always some risk in commingling horses/livestock. Having your horse current on vaccination, especially Tetanus, EEE, WNV, Rabies and Flu/Rhino may protect in case of exposure to these diseases.
- Carry or locate source for feed and hay of type your horse is accustomed to.

A frequent question that arises in evacuation is: “Do I have to have Health Certificates and Coggins tests with me when I evacuate?” The State Veterinarians in the southeastern states have managed in some cases to waive certain health record requirements in emergency. In some states, the State Veterinarian may not have the authority to alter requirements without legislative approval. It is highly recommended that you carry with you, in addition to your best proof of ownership (registration papers, photos, bill of sale, etc.) proper health papers, at a minimum, your Coggins Test record. If you are unable to obtain these, you may be restricted from crossing state lines or staying in certain facilities. In general, all efforts are made to find some accommodation for emergency movement. During the (endless) 2004 hurricane season, several southern states and Florida agreed to allow emergency movement of horses out of Florida, with certain checks at the border, and agreement to return home within a certain number of days after the evacuation was lifted.

Below are contacts and web sites for information from some of the states most often threatened by hurricanes. Please make the best use of the information provided, and

remember to deal with state officials and stable owners with courtesy. They are doing a lot to make your evacuation safe and your horse's sheltering appropriate. In most cases, the State Veterinarian's Office can assist or direct to appropriate contact.

Louisiana: Louisiana Department of Agriculture assisted by Louisiana Horseman's

Guide: www.lahg.net

State Veterinarian: Dr. Mack Lea: ph. 225-925-3980

Contact: Bonnie Clark: ph. Cell: 225-721-1571

Work : 225-784-8760

Mississippi: Mississippi Board of Animal Health provides the Mississippi Emergency Management information for public access and public announcements:

<http://www.msema.org/AnimalHorseStables.htm>

State Veterinarian: Dr. Jim Watson: ph. 601-359-1170

Alabama: Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries and the Alabama Horse Council assist: <http://www.agi.state.al.us>

Dr. Tony Frazier, State Veterinarian

Ph. 334/240-7253

Email: stvet@agi.state.al.us

Crystal.allen@agi.alabama.gov

Florida

Emergency management information including emergency equine shelters can be obtained on the Division of Animal Industry's website, www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/.

State Veterinarian: Dr. Thomas Holt or Emergency Programs Administrator: Dr. Greg Christy, (850) 410-0902.

South Carolina: Clemson Livestock-Poultry Health and the SC Department of Agriculture will assist. Contact Billie Jones (803-260-6433) at CULPH or Mary Ellen Tobias at SC Department of Agriculture (803-734-2200). Information at:

www.clemson.edu/lph , click on Emergency Preparedness, then scroll to bottom for equine evacuation information.

State Veterinarian: Dr. Tony Caver: ph. 803 788-2260

Georgia: Stables, both large and small, are licensed by Georgia Department of Agriculture. Information available at: www.agr.georgia.gov, click on: GDA Divisions, Animal Industry, then Equine Health, Emergency Contacts-Equine Health Section, Melinda Dennis: ph. (404) 656-3713. After hours and weekends: GEMA (404) 635-7000 or 1-800-TRY-GEMA.

State Veterinarian: Dr. Lee Myers: ph. (404) 656-3671 or after hours, (404)895-5658.

For corrections or additions to this listing, please contact USDA Area Emergency Coordinator, Venaye P. Reece, DVM, cell ph. (803) 486-0215, hph. (803) 424-1302, or email: venaye.p.reece@aphis.usda.gov or Keith Kleine at the AAEP office at (800) 443-0177 or e-mail kkleine@aaep.org.

Last Updated: June 19, 2006