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First Aid / Emergency Care - Sep 15th, 04

Hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding and fire are the most common natural disasters in the state of Florida. The leading cause of death in large animals during Hurricane Andrew in 1992 included animals killed in collapsed barns, electrocution, kidney failure secondary to dehydration and animals hit and killed on roadways or tangled in barbed wire after escaping from their pasture. Each farm should have a written disaster plan to optimize safety and survival of all animals.

Before the Storm

Horses

- **Vaccination:** All horses should have a tetanus toxoid vaccine within the last year. Due to the increase in mosquitoes after massive rainfall, all horses should receive West Nile virus and Eastern / Western Encephalitis vaccinations at the beginning of hurricane season.

- **Coggins test:** A negative Coggins test is necessary if the horse needs to be evacuated to a community shelter or cross the state line.

- **Health Certificate:** A health certificate is required to cross the state line. This may be necessary for evacuation of coastal areas.

- **Identification:** Each horse should be identified with at least one, if not all of the following:
 - o A leather halter with name/farm information in a zip lock bag secured to the halter with duct tape.
 - o A luggage tag with the horse/farm name and phone number braided into tail. (Make sure this is water proof).
 - o Photos of each horse as proof of ownership highlighting obvious identifying marks.

- **Evacuation:** Evacuation of flood planes and coastal areas is recommended. Evacuation must occur 48 hours before hurricane force winds occur in the area. Transportation of horses when wind gusts exceed 40 mph is dangerous.
 - o Contact the Emergency Evacuation Relocation List at www.SSHC.org/evac or The Sunshine State Horse Council, Inc. (941) 731-2999 for more information.

- **Should horses be left in the pasture or placed in the barn?** If the pasture has good fencing and limited trees, it is probably best to leave the horses outside. Well constructed pole-barns or concrete block barns may provide safety from flying debris, but the horses may become trapped if the wind collapses the building.
 - o **Electrical lines:** Keep horses out of pastures with power lines.
 - o **Trees with shallow roots** will fall easily under hurricane force winds and can injure the

horse or destroy the fencing.

- o Fencing: Do not keep horses in barbed wire or electric fencing during a storm.
- o Fire Ants and snakes will search for high ground during flooding. Carefully look over the premises and feed for these potential dangers. Farm

· Water

- o Each horse should have 12 to 20 gallons per day stored.
- o Fill garbage cans with plastic liners and fill all water troughs.
- o Have a generator to run the well if you have large numbers of horses.
- o Keep chlorine bleach on hand to add to contaminated water if necessary. To purify water add two drops of chlorine bleach per quart of water and let stand for 30 minutes.

· Feed storage

- o Store a minimum of 72 hours of feed and hay (seven days is best). It is very possible that roads will be closed because of down power lines and trees, limiting access to feed stores. Cover hay with water proof tarps and place it on pallets. Keep grain in water tight containers.

· Secure all movable objects

- o Remove all items from hallways.
- o Jumps and lawn furniture should be secured in a safe place.
- o Place large vehicles/ tractors/ trailers in an open field where trees cannot fall on them.

· Turn off electrical power to barn

· Emergency First Aid Kit

- o Bandages (leg wraps and quilts)
- o Antiseptics
- o Scissors/Knife
- o Topical antibiotic ointments
- o Tranquilizers
- o Pain Relievers (phenylbutazone or Banamine®)
- o Flashlight and extra batteries
- o Extra halters/lead ropes
- o Clean towels
- o Fly spray

· Emergency Tools

- o Chain saw / fuel
- o Hammer/nails
- o Fence repair materials
- o Wire cutters / tool box / pry bar
- o Fire Extinguisher
- o Duct tape After the Storm

· Carefully inspect each horse for injury to eyes and limbs.

· Walk the pasture to remove debris. Make sure that no Red Maple tree branches fell in the pasture. Just a few wilted leaves are very toxic to horses. Clinical signs of Red Maple toxicity

are dark chocolate colored gums, anorexia and red urine.

- Inspect the property for down power lines.
- Take pictures of storm damage.
- If your horse is missing, contact the local animal control or disaster response team.
- For more information regarding general emergency management in the state of Florida contact <http://www.floridadisaster.org>.

You may also find additional emergency information by visiting, <http://www.thehorse.com/pdf/emergency/emergency.pdf>.

[« Back](#)

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