

HORSES IN BUSHFIRES.

Examine your horse facility.

Note what is **NOT FLAMMABLE**. You will quickly realize that most things burn - wood, plastic, paper, the thinner metals, aluminum, etc.

Do not store feed in your house or garage. It is possible that your home insurance could be negated by the storage of feed in improper places.

Feed burns! Alfalfa, oat and timothy hay, even pellets and grains - the drier, the faster it burns. Keep your feed and bedding away from structures. The fine dust from feed left on the floor is also flammable. Dispose of ruined feed immediately.

Hay stacks can become blazing infernos. Use a flame retardant cover over your stack, but if it catches fire--pull the stack apart.

Bedding, such as straw and wood shavings in stalls and corrals, is extremely flammable. Burning pieces can whip around in the wind and spread fire.

Horse manure burns! Store it in a safe place away from buildings, and have the pile removed often.

Cob webs (yes, spider webs) are **FLAMMABLE** and **EXPLOSIVE**, and will nurture a fire. Sweep cob webs from rafters, walls, and fixtures often.

Spontaneous combustion can happen where you store saddle cleaning materials (such as oily rags, saddle oil, kerosene). Store cleaning materials in sealed fire resistant containers.

Eaves on your buildings can attract fire if they are open. Roofs and rain gutters must be kept free of leaves, pine needles and other debris.

Since you cannot seal a barn like you can your home, be sure to follow the above suggestions to keep your barn as safe as possible.

Examine your horse fencing. Wood fencing burns, PVC fencing melts. They may not be safe in a fire. Consider the location of your property, and select the safest type of fencing for your animals. Do not count on an "electric hot wire" to contain your horse.

Use fire safe equipment for your horse. Nylon halters and ropes can melt into your horse's flesh. Use a leather halter and a cotton lead rope. Metal pieces on halters and leads can become burning hot. Don't use nylon or plastic blankets, sheets, fly masks, or leg wraps, as they also can melt.

Be an aware owner.

Keep your horses on a regular basis, and check with your veterinarian for his/her recommendations. Also consider immunizations against tetanus. Wild and non-domesticated animals are displaced during fires and floods, and exposure may occur to wallabies, possums, devils etc.

Horses may panic and become wild with fear when they perceive danger. Horses that are in a panic state frequently will not leave the security of their stall or corral. Any barn can burn, and horses must be led out and placed in a secured area, or they may run back into the burning barn.

If you must tie your horse, be certain it is to a post firmly set. A frightened horse can rip a fence down, and if tied to a rail that becomes loose, the horse will panic further. Practice tying your horse for extended periods of time so it can be secured during a real emergency.

If you own a horse, you should also own a horse trailer and adequate tow vehicle to transport your animal. Always have at least a half tank of fuel. Keep your rig in top condition and have it serviced regularly (at least twice a year). Practice loading and unloading your horse, even in the dark. Also practice hooking up the trailer to the tow vehicle in the dark. If you do not own a horse trailer, you need to plan ahead of time for transportation for your horse. Plans should also include practice loading sessions for your horse, and a destination for your horse in an emergency. Let friends and neighbors know about your plan. In some cases, local Animal Control personnel, Fire Department or Police Officer could request that owners lead their animals out of a dangerous area to keep the roads clear.

If you board your horse, make sure that the stable manager has an emergency plan. Go over the plan with the stable management. Use this booklet to help when you examine the boarding facility where you keep your horse.

Make sure that your horse has some sort of permanent identification, such as a freeze brand, micro chip implant, tattoo, etc., and keep photographs (winter and summer coat colors can be different) and copy of all your horse's identifiable features in a safe place.

Pack a Horse Evacuation Kit in a non-combustible container with all the equipment you will need. If possible, keep this evacuation kit in your horse trailer.

Fire Extinguisher (If you keep this extinguisher in your horse trailer, you will need to check its charge more often than extinguishers you keep on a wall at home or in the barn. The movement over roads in your trailer will cause the chemicals to condense. To continue the life of your fire extinguisher, tap it gently all around the sides and bottom with a rubber mallet at least twice a year. This will keep the chemical retardant in a proper state of suspension for use.)

ESSENTIAL ITEMS.

Water bucket
Halter (Leather or Nylon)
Lead rope (12 foot cotton is best)
Equine medications & instructions
Identification papers/ photographs for each horse
Feed instructions
50 foot cotton rope
Equine & Human first aid kits
NOTES:
Flashlight (keep fresh batteries in a separate package.)
Roll of Duct Tape
Permanent ink black sharp point marker pen
Cattle Marking Crayon
A change of clothing for you
Keep identification tags on your halters and lead ropes.