



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission
"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TAHC Reminds Equine Owners to Practice Sound Biosecurity Measures

AUSTIN – The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) reminds equine owners to keep their horses healthy by practicing simple and good biosecurity measures. Biosecurity is a set of preventative measures designed to reduce the risk of introduction and transmission of an infectious disease agent, such as Equine Herpes Virus-1 (EHV-1). Although Texas horses have not been implicated, EHV-1 has recently been found in other states.

Any time horses are congregated at events, owners increase the chance that their horses may be exposed to an infectious disease agent. Pathogens may be brought to and spread at an event by horses, people, domestic animals other than horses, vehicles, equipment, insects, ticks, birds, wildlife including rodents, feed, waste and water.

By following these simple guidelines you can help minimize that risk.

- Consult your veterinarian to establish an appropriate vaccination program for your horse(s)
- Tie your horse(s) to your trailer. If using a stall, clean and disinfect it, if possible, before stalling your horse. Always use clean, fresh bedding.
- Minimize your horse(s) having direct contact with unknown horses, especially nose to nose contact.
- Use your own water and feed buckets. Avoid letting your horse(s) drink from a communal water trough. Fill water buckets from a faucet.
- Do not share grooming equipment or tack. If you must, then wash and disinfect it before returning to your own horse(s).
- Avoid petting and touching other horses in order to minimize the risk of transferring a disease back to your horse. If you must handle other horses then wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid letting strangers pet your horse especially if they have horses of their own.
- Before returning home from an event clean up your equipment (boots, tack, grooming supplies, buckets, etc.) to help reduce the risk of transporting an infectious agent back home. Consider washing and disinfecting your trailer when you return home.
- If possible, isolate your returning horses for 2 weeks or at least prevent nose to nose contact with your other horses.

Don't forget to consult your veterinarian concerning these and other steps you can follow which may reduce the risk of your horse acquiring an infectious disease while traveling.

Biosecurity suggestions for *event organizers*:

- Minimize nose-to-nose contact between horses where possible.
- Minimize spread by human hands (limit public access, provide hand sanitizer, establish restricted areas in front of stalls and trailers, post hand-washing signs).
- Minimize spread by shared tack (post signs advising participants not to share equipment).
- Solid, high-walled stalls are ideal to minimize spread of infectious nasal droplets.
- For multi-day events, consider implementation of a "No Fever" Policy. For more details see the following references:
- http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Equine_Biosecurity.html
- http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/2011/bro_keep_horses_healthy.pdf

For more information, visit www.tahc.texas.gov , call 1-800-550-8242 or contact your local TAHC region office.

Founded in 1893, the Texas Animal Health Commission works to protect the health of all Texas livestock, including: cattle, swine, poultry, sheep, goats, equine animals, and exotic livestock. The TAHC strives to keep Texas' livestock disease free, ultimately allowing for better marketability and commerce.

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