

Let's Have a Safe Horse Show!



New York State Horse Council

MANAGEMENT SAFETY GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ORGANIZERS OF NEW YORK STATE HORSE COUNCIL SPONSORED EVENTS (REVISED 2/2022)

The NYSHC Board of Directors, with the following list of recommendations and requirements, passed these guidelines as a mandatory rule in 1993. They were previously revised on 05/10/97 and 02/04/02.

1. The New York State Horse Council recommends that show, event and activity managers consider mandatory vaccination for influenza, rhinopneumonitis, and rabies. In addition to the requirements of Part 351, Animal Health Requirements for Admission to Fairs (351.3, 351.4, 351.80) which require proof of rabies vaccination within one year and a current Coggins test showing the horse is negative for equine infectious anemia, NYSHC recommends that any horse vaccinated more than three months previous to the event for influenza and rhinopneumonitis be boosted prior to coming on the grounds.
Because the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets may issue notices regarding other disease controls as circumstances change, organizers should check the website at [ww.Agriculture.NY.gov](http://www.Agriculture.NY.gov) or call 518 457-3502 for the latest requirements.
2. Anytime horses gather in close proximity there is risk that one or more animals may harbor an infectious disease such as influenza, rhinopneumonitis, strangles or other condition that could be contagious. The American Association of Equine Practitioners has published comprehensive biosecurity guidelines that outline routine biosecurity protocols that are applicable to events. These guidelines also detail the appropriate response if an outbreak is suspected, and describe the identification of key personnel and important contacts. Management should have access to these guidelines, and assure that the routine protocols described are followed as appropriate to the event and premises. All key personnel should be familiar with the steps that should be followed if an outbreak is suspected, and implement them if needed. The guidelines can be found under the “biosecurity guidelines” on this portion of the AAEP website: <https://aaep.org/guidelines/infectious-disease-control>

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3. Because appropriate ventilation and vaccination rules are two of the most important things that can be done to promote a healthy environment for horses, NYSHC recommends that all events that include stabling designate a barn manager with responsibility for ventilation control and lighting during the course of the event.
4. NYSHC recommends that any event of two days or more contract with a veterinarian to be present during the hours of the activity, and on call at all other times. Many shows find that a vet is particularly needed at the time that horses are being off-loaded from their trailers. Having a vet on call or on site is a rule or minimum requirement of most horse sports federations, and is important for the wellbeing of the horses.
5. Supplies should be kept on hand for the vet's use, although most of them have well-stocked trucks. Frequently needed are extra flashlights, gallon jugs of clean water and boxes of small, medium and large nitrile examination gloves. The barn manager should have a horse first aid kit with enough material to bandage a severely bleeding wound immediately, without having to wait for an on-call vet to arrive. A human first aid kit in the stable area, with its location marked on area signs, is also helpful. A toolkit that has items like a crowbar, hammer, pliers, wire cutters and other items used in construction is advised in case there is urgent need to repair or dismantle a stall, gate, fence or other item involved in horse confinement.
6. Floor plan signs should be posted to help exhibitors/participants understand where manure is to be placed for collection. Management needs to ensure that manure disposal is both timely and complete.
7. Separate areas for parking, warm-up, competition, food service, and spectators must be designated, marked, fenced and/or roped off as appropriate and necessary. Areas where horses are being led or ridden should be off limits for casual spectators, who may have no knowledge of safe zones around horses.
8. Management must plan for the logistics of emergency medical and veterinary support in case of accident or illness. If the support people are on call rather than on the grounds, access to the emergency site must be kept clear and someone provided to guide them from the facility entrance to where they are needed. Guidelines for appropriate levels of medical support can be found in the current U.S. EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION rulebook, which can be accessed on their website free of charge. When calling for help, the caller must give careful instructions to the location of the emergency, including which entrance to use if more than one is open. Advance planning should include providing a current map of the site if support people are not familiar with the facility and judges, officials and volunteers should be familiar with how to contact medical and/or vet help from every part of the grounds used for horse-related activities.
9. Fire extinguishing equipment, clearly marked and currently checked and inspected (current inspection date) must be available in the stabling areas, the bedding storage area, and anywhere else where it may be appropriate. The stabling area and exhibit grounds should be checked annually by the local fire department or town/city codes officer to assure that all local laws and codes are observed.

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10. Any temporary electrical lines must be checked and approved by a qualified electrician. Public address and other communication equipment should also be checked for safety, and should be able to hear throughout the horse-involved parts of the grounds.
11. Sufficient water must be available to serve drinking and bathing needs of the expected number of horses. Where possible a hose should be provided. At a minimum, if an open water storage tank is used a dipping bucket from which participants fill their own buckets must be provided for hygienic reasons. If the provided water is not intended for or safe for human use, it must be labeled that it is not for human consumption.
12. Dogs, if allowed at all on the grounds, must be restrained on leads or confined in cages at all times. If they are NOT allowed, signs should be posted on access roads in parking areas to give owners adequate warning. If dogs are banned, this should be stated on any prize list or activity announcement.
13. An adult must closely supervise small children at all times. Signs to this effect should be posted at entry points and in parking areas, and particularly at all stabling entrances.
14. Motorcycles, Mopeds, All-Terrain Vehicles, Golf Carts and Bicycles, if allowed, should be restricted on the grounds to separate them from areas where horses will be moving about, with signage to make clear where they are and are not allowed. If the organizing committee needs to use such vehicles for the running of the event, they must make certain that the drivers are thoroughly familiar with the vehicle's controls, as well as what a horse's reaction may be to the vehicle. Children below the legal age of operation of any of these vehicles must not be allowed to access them.
15. Smoking must be banned from bedding storage and stabling areas with appropriate signage posted. For show and activity areas fire and local government codes and laws must be observed.
16. Footing must be well maintained and appropriate to the horse activity being offered. All trails and walkways should be reasonably clear of obstacles. Known hazards should be clearly marked or barricaded.
17. Food concessions must meet local Department of Health standards. For sanitary reasons horses should not be allowed in their immediate vicinity. Sufficient electricity and water safe for human consumption must be provided to the concessions.
18. Trash containers must be provided, particularly in the areas of the concessions and stables. They should be emptied on a frequent and regular basis.
19. Labeled Sharps Containers (for syringes/needles) must be placed in designated areas of stabling, either near trash containers or near manure collection points, to make sure that they are not mixed into ordinary trash or placed where people may be stuck by them.
20. If horse are stabled overnight, a competent adult guard must be located in that area.

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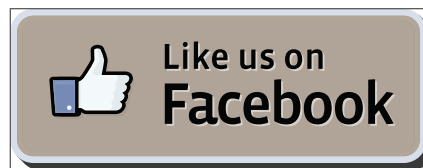
21. Toilet facilities, adequate hand sanitizing and paper supplies must be provided, with a plan for frequent portable toilet maintenance if they are used.

22. Volunteers for the event must be thoroughly briefed about the nature of their jobs, and how to provide help to participants in case of an emergency.

These guidelines were originally prepared by Ann Dwyer, DVM, past President of the American Association of Equine Practitioners and Drusilla Malavase, Safety Chair of the NYSHC. Additional review was provided for the 2002 revision by George King, past President of NYSHC; Harry Stokes, Esq Equestrian Attorney ; and Richard London, Paramedic; all members of the Horse Council's Board of Directors at the time.

Resources used have included rulebooks, organizers' guides, insurance company requirements, the events guide of the American Medical Equestrian Association, and many years of veterinary support and horse sport organizations, emergency medical and safety experience. Suggestions for ways to make this pamphlet more useful or organizers will be welcomed !

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