

HOMEWORK for HORSE OWNERS

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SOME SIMPLE REALISTIC EQUIPMENT & PPE PURCHASES

Be a hero to your horse and get some of the simple things that you can ACTUALLY use to save your horse in an emergency, and keep yourself safe in the event of an emergency. These simple tools allow you to perform a huge variety of simple rescue manipulations of cast horses, trapped in mud or ditches or holes or with a hoof thru a stall divider or trailer entrapment.

To me, this is a wiser use of purchasing power than those fancy looking blankets in the catalogs (and in case you didn't know - blankets on horses in a wildfire zone or a barn fire lead to horrific tragedies).

- 2 Webbings (10 cm wide, 6-10m long with looped ends) \$100 see HAST <http://rescue.hastpsc.com/straps/straps.html>
- Gloves \$15 locally available
- REFLECTIVE CONSPICUITY TAPE for your trailer (\$65 for kit)
- HELMET (with chinstrap) \$120 Rescue quality Petzl – available online
- Firearm (price varies – for field euthanasia – locally available)
- RECIPROCATING SAW with Battery pack \$120 locally available at hardware stores
- Heavy duty cane, telescoping Boat Hook or Reach Tool \$20 (marine or dock stores)
- 10 m of rope (1/2 inch preferred) \$25 local hardware stores
- VEST / JACKET WITH REFLECTIVE / BRIGHT \$10 local safety or hardware store
- Identification / Certification tags (If you are part of a legitimate organization)
- HAND TOOLS, Duct Tape, Hay Twine \$15 local hardware store

TOTAL = \$500 (sans firearm)

Familiarize yourself with use of the webbing and tools for cast or down horses before you try it - <https://thehorse.com/156728/best-practices-for-moving-down-horses/> Best Practices for Manipulations of Down Horses

Page 422 - https://aaep.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Proceedings%2063rd%20Annual%20Convention%202017_0.pdf Manipulations of downed horses
<https://aaep.digitellinc.com/aaep/sessions/2298/view> online purchase intro to manipulations.

Then you need to take a look at your personal WILDFIRE or HURRICANE or CATASTROPHIC PREDICTION PREPAREDNESS for an EVACUATION of your property. Do you know how to be alerted if there is a predictable disaster coming? Do you have the apps on your phone or computer that can track the progress of wildfires, hurricanes or other looming disasters? When you KNOW you are in a looming disaster evacuation zone – there are some basic things you need to do so that you can literally LOAD AND GO with your family, animals and personal valuables in a couple of minutes if you have to:

- Truck hitched to Trailer
- Truck fueled and pointed down the driveway

- 3 days worth of food, meds, water loaded up
- Valuables packed and ready and locked up
- GO BAGS packed and loaded (whatever YOU need to live and function in a disaster shelter)
- Everyone contributes to, communicates and knows the plan
- GO TO location / shelter coordinated ahead of time
- Regular updates on fire radio and media - see <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/>

GENERAL DISASTER PREPARATION to do before any disaster happens – these efforts will pay off by determining the hazards that can ACTUALLY happen to you (your RISK ASSESSMENT) and then you can make better individual plans to respond if something actually happens.

- Find where your property lies in the FLOODING MAPS (LITERALLY - type in the address at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home> and also see <https://www.fema.gov/risk-map-program-information-homeowners-renters-and-business-owners>) and/or WILDFIRE MAPS (NOT AS SPECIFIC (<https://www.weather.gov/fire/> and <https://www.wfas.net/> and <https://www.firelab.org/project/wildfire-hazard-potential>)
- GET A WEATHER RADIO and learn to use it.
- DOWNLOAD and USE APPS FOR EVACUATION ZONES FOR NUCLEAR FACILITIES OR EARTHQUAKES OR MUDSLIDES, ETC. see https://www2.usgs.gov/natural_hazards/ if you live in one of these geological hazard zones.
- Regularly FIX the fences, clean up the hazards in your pastures, and put in a SECONDARY FENCE to prevent animals escaping your property.
- Maintain your truck and trailer at all times so that you can evacuate in an emergency – I see way too many people leave hay or the lawnmower on their trailer when they think they aren't using it, or take forever to get tires fixed or other maintenance done.
- FENCE any DAM, POND or WATERHOLE OFF for the winter (or summer droughts) to prevent mud entrapment and surface ice emergencies. If the animals HAVE to use watercourses for access to fresh water – ensure the ice is regularly broken and that there is no chance of the animals going out onto the surface ice.
- Develop an evacuation plan and actually PRACTICE IT, hitch the trailer, load the stuff, load the animals, etc. and drive to a local park to practice. TIME IT. How can you improve the plan? What did you forget that you would need in a real emergency? Where would you really go if it was out of state or out of the region? Coordinate these things ahead of time.

Next – if you keep your horses in a barn or any kind of structure – you will want to make sure that your horses' bedroom is a safe place for him to live by preventing fires. (Research shows that actual removal of horses from barn fires is rare, difficult and dangerous – and it requires someone to be present when the fire starts to remove the horses within 5 to 7 minutes.)

The MOST important change you can make is to contact an electrical contractor and have them update all Electrical Wiring and Power Panel to provide the service for what your barn is actually using. A

challenge for barns in many areas is that they don't require adherence to codes because they are agricultural – just because the lights turn on doesn't mean it is a safe place for your horse.

Within the barn – everyone must work together to manage the facility to eliminate or reduce all the combustibles (don't store hay in the barn) and remove obstacles blocking egress for both people and horses – you will need to ensure that there are exits / egress sufficient for size of barn (less than 50 feet to an exit).

Fundamental to finding barn fires before they ignite is a functional Smoke Detection and Alarm System that will alert you and the fire department to the smoldering fire. This isn't a \$5 battery detector from your local store – this needs to be hardwired into the barn and connected to the security system and notification system. Call a contractor and get a quote on a system that is appropriate for outdoor use in barns – so that you can sleep at night.

Access to Stalls FROM THE OUTSIDE DOOR is the best way to allow responders to extricate horses from a barn once it is on fire – it is extremely dangerous to go down the interior aisleway due to smoke and the danger of roof collapse. This adds to the cost of building (or retrofitting) a barn – but it offers a realistic method of removing horses. Even better is to build in a runout plan from the outside doors of the stalls so that horses can leave to a paddock or pasture away from the barn without having to be individually caught and led or held.

Download PDF – <https://aaep.org/sites/default/files/issues/proceedings-08proceedings-z9100108000160.pdf> Strategies for prevention

and

[https://www.academia.edu/18599726/How to Configure an Equine Facility to Prevent and Better Respond to Barn Fires](https://www.academia.edu/18599726/How_to_Configure_an_Equine_Facility_to_Prevent_and_Better_Respond_to_Barn_Fires) How to prevent and respond

and <https://www.animalsheltering.org/sites/default/files/horses-101-gimenez-rebecca.pdf>

Lastly - one of the most fundamental parts of smooth evacuation from disasters is having a functional and safe TRAILER that your horses will load into, and having a plan for multiple trips if you don't have enough room to evacuate them all in one trip. This applies to day to day use of trailers, as well as emergencies. The most COMMON emergency your horse will have to evacuate? To the veterinarian because he is sick, injured or lame.

LEARN ABOUT: AXLES / BEARINGS, WHEELS, TIRES / BRAKES, HITCHING, BUY REFLECTIVE, AIR IN TIRES, TOOLS FOR FIXING IT, LUBE BEARINGS, ETC Maintenance and when buying a trailer. DOWNLOAD FREE: <https://ppp.purdue.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PPP-114.pdf> UNDERSTANDING THE HORSE TRAILER RIG – Purdue University, Dr. Robin Ridgeway

ALSO - free download of PDF - [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283794562_Non-Commercial Horse Transport New Standards for Trailers in Canada](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283794562_Non-Commercial_Horse_Transport_New_Standards_for_Trailers_in_Canada) Dr. Creiger and Dr. Gimenez – issues and challenges for horse trailer manufacture.

Be your horse's hero by prevention, planning and coordinating ahead of time.