

# the EQUINE Healthline

A Monthly Newsletter

July 2008

## RETHINK Your Disaster Preparedness!!



*The summer barely started and we have already encountered numerous challenges to our personal and local community emergency preparedness programs! Fires have become an increasingly threatening risk to both our family residences and those of our horses. In a moment's notice, you may receive notification to evacuate your family and pets. The better prepared you are AHEAD OF TIME, the better the chances of survival for all. In addition, a solid and executable plan for your horse's care and/or evacuation will allow you to focus more effectively upon the safety of your family members and those neighbors who are NOT prepared.*

While many communities are now hastening to establish contingency protocols with local agencies and horseman's associations, the best advice available indicates that personal preparedness is your number 1 safety solution.

**1. Evacuation preparedness - is your trailer readily accessible and prepared to load at a moment's notice?** Is your horse well schooled and comfortable with the trailer loading process - especially under duress or chaos? Are you familiar with local community locations and phone numbers for relocation? Are there locks or gate codes which are necessary to both access AND leave your stable quickly?

**2. What if you are unable to evacuate and have to stay?** Do you have a plan to move horses to an open, safe area of the stable? Do you have hay and water to utilize until relief arrives?

**3. Can you accurately identify your horse(s) for emergency staff?** Microchip identification is a simple and reliable means of both identifying the owner and obtaining valuable emergency contact information for relocation! In addition, having a laminated owner/horse ID card with pictures of your horse can be invaluable in relocating lost horses, as well as a small pet ID tag on the halter.

## Special Issue Focus on Disaster Preparedness

Are you ready for the unexpected?

## Microchip ID Program

PEMC is pleased to provide microchip identification services as a means for all horse owners to be prepared in case of emergency disaster situations which may separate you from your horses. In California, fires and earthquakes are our greatest concern, but accurate horse identification for shipment or sale is also becoming increasingly valuable.

The chip implantation process is simple and accompanied by a centralized database which allows you to register your personal emergency contact information for rapid access by phone when needed just by scanning and reading your horse's microchip number. Both the RES-Q and AVID microchip technologies are currently available and we provide you with all the necessary information to register your horse(s) at the time of chip implantation.



For more information on how best to prepare yourself for potential emergencies / disasters, go to our PEMC website and/or stop by our clinic for an AAEP (American Association of Equine Practitioners) client information pamphlet on Emergency Preparedness.

**Learn more about disaster preparedness and the PEMC Microchip ID Program online at**  
<http://www.peneq.com/equinehealthline/0708/>

# Tips for Preparedness



In the wake of flooding in the Midwest, wildfires throughout California, and the ever present awareness of earthquakes in this sunny, but occasionally shaky Bay Area, we revisit our focus upon "What do we do if it happens?"

During the Loma Prieta Quake in '89, many residents on the Peninsula found themselves temporarily without power, phone communications (both cell and land lines) were disrupted or tied up with calls, municipal water supplies and electric-driven well pumps may have been non-functional and communication with emergency agencies (police, fire, and yes mobile veterinarian services) were often impossible since pagers & phone communications were down... As we review the national response conclusions to disasters such as hurricanes Katrina, Rita and most recently Wilma, we all need to prepare ourselves to be self-sufficient before organized municipal and national response teams can be mobilized! So...what can you do to best prepare for an unexpected event such as this?

Here are some tips for your "horse preparedness" to add to the plan you have developed for your family and loved ones:

- 1. WATER:** Horses can consume 20-30 gallons of water daily so if water service is disrupted, you can keep several 5 gal water jugs stored or draw water via pump (will likely need a generator to pump) from a swimming pool or similar water tank.
- 2. EQUIPMENT:** Extra halters and lead ropes in case the primary one is buried in the barn...it's a good idea to affix a laminated label to the halter with your Name/Horse's Name/Local and outside-the-area emergency phone # contact/home address. Storing this halter/lead in your trailer or someplace other than the barn may facilitate finding it in a disaster.
- 3. TRAILER-READINESS:** Checking your trailer every 6 months or so will help guarantee it's readiness in time of need. Check lights, tire pressures, location (not under overhanging tree limbs or under structures which might fall in an earthquake and immobilize the unit), and tow vehicle preparedness are IMPORTANT! Transportation of your horse to a safe haven or even to a veterinary facility for medical care are often overlooked in planning, so if you don't own a trailer, think of arranging these plans with a friend who does AHEAD OF TIME, and plan how you will liaison with them in the event of need.
- 4. FIRST AID KIT:** Many basic kits or lists of contents for you to accumulate yourselves are available (see our website "Emergencies") for a list. Basic medicines should be augmented with leg wraps/shipping boots and clean towels and blankets to help administer any First Aid treatments initially.
- 5. HAY or FEED:** The simplest of all is to store a bale of hay or some Equine Senior for emergency use. Trailers are a good storage site but be sure to check that food is "rotated" frequently enough to remain fresh and free of vermin and mold.
- 6. HORSE I.D. FILE:** Keeping a notebook or laminated sheet with picture and microchip I.D. info in your trailer or somewhere accessible can be VALUABLE in aiding you in recovery should your horse be lost or relocated. These along with a halter plate ID can help authorities match and reunite owner and horse. See our info on Peninsula Equine Medical Center Microchip and National Horse ID Program (HORSEtrac®).
- 7. IMPORTANT NUMBERS:** Pre-think and record on a laminated sheet ALL phone #'s you might need PLUS addresses of friends/contacts/emergency locations (should phones be inoperable) and keep with your emergency horse ID sheet. And don't forget:

- Police / Sheriff
- FIRE Department
- Animal Control
- Veterinarians
- HORSEtrac®
- Emergency radio stations

Murphy's Law says that once you do all this preparation, and work to keep it current it is likely you will never use it...LET'S HOPE SO!!!

**Go online to <http://www.peneq.com/equinehealthline/0708/> for more information and an emergency contact information template.**