

# NATURAL HAZARDS, DISASTERS AND EMERGENCY PLAN



- In the case of an emergency in the arena the RIDING INSTRUCTOR is in charge.
- In the case of an emergency outside of the arena, the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR is in charge.
- If the Instructor should become incapacitated the Executive Director will be in charge. If the Executive Director is incapacitated the Instructor will be in charge.

## NATURAL HAZARDS (A7-1)

**BEE SWARMS:** Be alert to the possibility of bee swarms. If a swarm is sighted, note the direction and alert the riding instructor. The Riding Instructor will stop the lesson and evaluate the situation. If a dismount is necessary, side walkers will assist with the dismount and accompany riders to shelter. The horse handler will move the horse away from the approaching swarm and horse handler and horse will take shelter.

**FIRE ANTS:** Mark the ant mound location and tell the facility manager of the problem. If bitten, remove all ants and immediately wash the area of the ant bites. If allergic to ants, ask for help from others to contact a physician and follow medical advice.

**LIGHTNING/THUNDERSTORMS:** If determined to be close and a dismount is necessary, side walkers will assist with dismount and accompany riders to shelter. The horse handler and horse will take shelter. Everyone will move indoors or to a shelter that is grounded.

**POISON IVY/OAK:** Personnel will be cautioned that poison ivy/oak may be present in certain locations. Therefore, people need to look at the area before weeding, mowing or walking through and check for it.

**SNAKES:** Alert appropriate people to the location of a snake if one is seen and keep everyone away from the area until the snake is removed or killed. Everyone should be instructed to use caution when in the hay storage areas, tall vegetation, feed room and all areas where reptiles may hide. Never reach into an area which is obstructed. If anyone is bitten, they should be transported to the emergency room immediately or call 911.

**SPIDERS:** The same cautionary procedures apply as with snakes. The area that poisonous spiders are seen must be sprayed to ensure their demise.

**WASP NESTS:** Direct everyone away from the area until the nest is removed or effectively sprayed.

**WILD ANIMALS:** Notify the riding instructor immediately when the animal is spotted. Halt the lesson and await instructions from the instructor. Side walkers should remain with the rider and horse handler should keep the horse calm.

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## MANMADE HAZARDS (A7-2)

**UNDERGROUND GAS PIPE LINES:** Never dig deeper than one foot without first contacting the gas company and other utilities as required by law. Heavy trucks and equipment should not be driven directly over underground gas lines. The locations of the lines are indicated by yellow and/or white paint on the boundary fences.

## OPERATION OF FACILITIES AND/OR EQUIPMENT (A7-3)

**BUILDING COLLAPSE:** All measures shall be taken to prevent any building collapsing. If the situation should occur the area shall be marked off with signs/fencing to keep the area clear of undesigned personnel. If injury occurs from the building occurs, 911 should immediately be called and emergency contacts notified. Follow directions from trained professionals to secure the situation and stabilize any injured persons.

**ELECTROCUTION:** If electrocution occurs, immediately call 911 and clear the area. Follow instructions from the 911 dispatcher and keep calm.

**EQUIPMENT USE/INJURY:** Safety is the highest priority. The use of all motorized equipment, including but not limited to items such as the tractor, lawn mower, weed eater, shall be operated only with specific permission and direction of the facility manager or person designated by the facility manager. The facility manager will determine the ability and responsibility of each person to operate equipment. The operator will comply with the equipment use policy and be well instructed in its safe use. Every effort should be made to use equipment only when someone else is on the premises, in case help is needed. If no one else is present, the operator should tell family the estimated time of returning home, so that if they do not return home by that time, a safety check will be made. In the case of any injury, check the severity of the injury, administer First Aid, call 911 if necessary and consult emergency medical information before the arrival of EMS.

**EXPLOSION:** If an explosion of any kind occurs, any persons involved will be assessed for injuries and 911 and emergency contacts notified if needed. The area will be safely inspected and secured by designated personnel and/or trained professionals.

**LOSS OF POWER:** In the case of loss of power, flashlights are strategically placed in the office, volunteer room and tack room. Designated personnel shall make the appropriate contacts when needed to the electric company to resolve the situation. .

**LOSS OF WATER:** In the case of loss of water, designated personnel shall be immediately notified and will make the appropriate contacts to resolve the situation.

# NATURAL HAZARDS, DISASTERS AND EMERGENCY PLAN



## NATURAL DISASTERS (A7-4)

**EARTHQUAKE:** In the case of an earthquake all people should find safety in the restrooms, under secure doorways or at minimum free from unstable structures. It is important to remain calm. If injuries occur, immediately call 911 and/or emergency contacts.

**FIRE:** Remove all occupants from structures. Lead all people to the front of the property as 911 is called. If possible, use fire extinguishers to stop the fire without putting self in danger. Move horses to a safe location. Move all vehicles that may hinder fire personnel's access or that may be near to or in path of fire. Ensure that no one re-enters the area that has been on fire until fire personnel give the okay.

If a fire is observed on or near the property, when no personnel or riders are present, the following fire procedures should be implemented:

1. Call 911 (phone is located in the office on top of the refrigerator); the physical address is on "Emergency Information" on the wall by the phone.
2. Assess the immediate danger.  
If a building is involved, evaluate if an adjoining structure is threatened. If so, determine if removal of essential items can be safely done without threat to people involved. If adjoining building can be safely entered, remove only KEY items such as:  
Office – clients and volunteer records (tan cabinet on opposite wall from door, top two drawers), business/deed records (small black safe underneath Director's desk), and main computer.  
Tack Room – saddles and harness equipment.  
Implement Room – anything combustible.
3. Call appropriate members of Center to assist with fire procedures, record/equipment removal, horse evacuation, etc.

**FLOOD:** The Center is on a higher, well drained area, so that flood waters will not reach our property. Be alert for the possibility of snakes, skunks and other wildlife seeking shelter from flooded areas. An inventory of feed and supplies should be taken when a flood warning is given in case roads become inaccessible. The roads coming to and from the Center may flood, so use utmost safety and do not take risks coming or leaving the Center.

**TORNADO:** All confined animals should be turned out. People should take shelter in the bathrooms which are of better construction than the portable office and tack room.

**HURRICANE:** Bring in all chairs, plants, manure carts, signs, buckets and maintenance equipment. Remove computer, client/volunteer files in tan cabinet by window, business/deed records in tall black cabinet by window from office and take to a safer location. Allow all horses to be free in pastures away from structures that may collapse or roofs that may blow off. Assign personnel to arrive soon after hurricane passes to check on health and safety of horses, evaluate structural damage, document damage for insurance and repair plans.

# NATURAL HAZARDS, DISASTERS AND EMERGENCY PLAN



## EQUINE HAZARDS (A7-5)

**DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR:** Dangerous equine activity, such as kicking or biting, shall be reported to the Riding Instructor immediately. The horse will be removed from the program for an evaluation.

**EQUINE HEALTH EMERGENCY:** The Riding Instructor should be notified for advice and/or management of equine injury or emergency. If they cannot be contacted, call the Veterinarian listed on the Emergency list located next to the office phone and in equine first aid kit.

**INJURY TO PERSON BY EQUINE:** The injury shall be evaluated and receive appropriate medical attention. An incident report form shall be completed. Horse(s) will be evaluated for continued use in the program.

**LOOSE HORSE:** Stop all riding activities until loose horse is secured. **Never run at a loose horse.** Get help, get a halter, quietly repeat “whoa” and then walk up slowly and put the halter on. The roadway gate will be closed until all horses are secured.

**RIDER FALL:** The HH shall move the horse away from the rider and secure it. The rider shall be evaluated for injury by the riding instructor. If injury is suspected, the rider will not be moved. Emergency medical assistance should be obtained immediately and First Aid administered on site by a trained person. Meanwhile, all other riders should be stopped and await instructions from riding instructor. If emergency personnel are required, a designated volunteer should call 911 and provide needed information then WALK to the street to wait for and direct emergency personnel to the scene.

**SECURING HORSES:** All horses shall be tied with a quick release knot or a quick release snap to a strong secure structure with the horse’s head unable to reach the ground for grazing, etc. Horses are to be secured in designated areas away from any riders and/or visitors.

## CONDUCT OF PERSONNEL, PARTICIPANTS & GUESTS (A7-6)

Everyone will be treated with the utmost respect. Any allegations of inappropriate and/or abusive behavior toward others, failure to follow established safety procedures, incidents due to the use of drugs or alcohol, and allegations of mistreatment/abuse of equines and other animals on the site will be investigated. If allegations are found to be legitimate, the individual will be removed from the program and the property.

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## EMERGENCY PLAN

**HORSE HANDLERS:** The horse handlers are to control the horse, removing it as safely and as soon as possible and return the horse to its stall or pasture. The horse handler shall then check with the Riding Instructor to determine if needed to report to direct EMS personnel.

**SIDEWALKERS (see additional handout):** Before each ride, the Riding Instructor will designate one side walker (SW 1) to be responsible for removal of the rider from the horse during an emergency while the other (SW 2) will be assigned to assist SW 1 (or as previously designated on the volunteer sign-up sheet). If the emergency does not affect the rider, all Sidewalkers should immediately move to a thigh hold, comfort the rider and remain calm. If dismount is necessary, SW 1 is responsible and SW 2 will assist. If extra help is needed SW 2 will summon that help. If help is summoned by phone, clear, precise directions will be given. SW 2 will remain on the phone until EMS has given instructions that you may leave the phone. SW 1 must remain with the rider.

**THERAPIST/RIDING INSTRUCTOR:** The therapist or Riding Instructor conducting the class will administer First Aid and determine if EMS is needed. The therapist or Riding Instructor shall be responsible for contacting the referring doctor, completing incident report forms and contacting the insurance company.

- The therapist or Riding Instructor shall either delegate or him/herself obtain all emergency release and general information from the Center files for accurate referral.
- Refer to previous pages and A7 instructions for additional and specific information pertaining to hazards, operations, disasters and conduct. This information is given to each volunteer and to participants at the Riding Therapy Center upon initial contact. This information is also given during training.
- Fire and Hazard Drills are discussed and practiced periodically.
- Manuals for equipment are kept in the black filing cabinet #4. No one is allowed to use equipment without clear directions or previous knowledge.

### **FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE:**

Alert all parents in advance if a fire drill is scheduled during or in between classes.

Advise all horse handlers to move horses to a designated safe area out of the arena depending on the location of the fire. All sidewalkers should become even more vigilant. The Riding Instructor shall direct all those trained and listed to assist with dismounts and escort the riders out of the arena to their parents/guardians/caregivers.

Everyone shall move away from all structures near the fire. The Riding Instructor shall appoint someone to supervise and direct all non-riders into designated safe areas. All vehicles shall be moved away from the building and from any area that would hamper the access of a fire vehicle.

Proceed to designated safe area and await instructions from riding instructor or designated personnel.

### **COMMUNICATION PLAN:**

The Director or Riding Instructor in charge will designate a person during the time of an emergency and/or occurrence to call the appropriate emergency contacts or emergency personnel. All emergency information is located next to the phone in the office on the wall, on the bulletin board in the volunteer room and in the equine first aid kit in the tack room.



## SAFETY RULES FOR WORKING AROUND HORSES

1. Speak to the horse in a low, calm voice before approaching him to avoid startling him. Approach a horse from the side, never the rear, so that the horse can see you.
2. Pet a horse by placing a hand on his shoulder or neck, not on the nose. The horse's nose is a sensitive spot.
3. People weigh a lot less than any equine. If a horse spooks or suddenly pulls back, do not try to out-pull him. This could cause him to pull back even harder. Step back with him until he calms down. If a horse rears up, release the hand closest to the halter to avoid being pulled off the ground.
4. Always walk around the **back** of a tied horse, *never* under or over a lead rope, with your hand on his rump so that he knows you are there. If you prefer to leave a distance between you and the horse while walking behind (i.e. if carrying a saddle, or unable to keep your hand on his rump) leave 3 – 5 feet between you and horse. You never know when they might take a step back or get startled.
5. Keep reins and lead lines off the ground so a horse doesn't step on them.
6. When cleaning hooves, do it from the side, and facing the rear of the horse. Position yourself so that your feet are to the side and not where the horse can step on them. Never squat or kneel down on the ground when cleaning hooves or grooming the legs. Maintain a quick escape position in case the horse moves.
7. When grooming or saddling a horse have the horse properly secured on the cross-ties in the tacking area or with a quick-release knot attached to a sturdy structure or designated tie area. Be sure the horse has enough room to move his head, but not get it under the lead rope or eat grass.
8. When bringing a horse in from the pasture, be constantly aware of the other horses in that pasture. They can quickly appear at the gate with you if they think it is time to come in for lunch! When turning a horse back out in the pasture, shut and latch the gate, walk away from the gate a few feet and turn the horse's head towards you or the gate before taking the halter off the horse.