

Animals in the WUI

Reducing Risks to Responders & Residents,
Improving Safety for Pets, Equines & Livestock

HALTER
Project

ANIMAL EMERGENCY + DISASTER
PREPAREDNESS + RESPONSE

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THE FIRE SERVICE is often the most trusted messenger in rural communities. This guide can help you reduce risks to Responders, and save human and animal lives and property.

KEY MESSAGES FOR THE FIRE SERVICE

- Assessing risks for animal evacuation and SIP actions should be ongoing and collaborative.
- Get familiar with the local and regional framework for Animal Disaster Response.
- Engage with Operational Area animal welfare stakeholders and volunteer response resources.
- Deliver consistent messaging that supports the local and regional animal response framework.
- Partner with Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) and stakeholder groups to educate your local companion animal businesses and NGOs such as equine boarding/training facilities, rescues, sanctuaries, and therapeutic programs involving animals.
- Keep materials current. Provide assistance to modify and/or deliver community education. This will save time in the long run!



Community Engagement

HELP YOUR WUI and rural communities embrace a culture of animal disaster preparedness that places great value on outreach that ensures continual education and transfer of knowledge.

IT'S VITAL to have strong plans for evacuating animals, AND sheltering them in-place.

- Identify the stakeholder groups who represent the needs of animal owners, such as HOAs, equestrian businesses, rescues and sanctuaries, Tribal organizations, and livestock producers.
- Collaborate with AHJ, and local stakeholders to define yearly baseline ALL HAZARDS SAFETY training for volunteer responders, and property and facility staff that addresses the hazards your community may face.
- Planning for Animal Safety in emergencies means staying aware and being ready 24/7.
- Assessing risks for animal evacuation and SIP actions should be ongoing, collaborative, updated as necessary.
- Air Ops: the presence of animals may impede operations. Drops pose threat to animals.
- After a fire or storm, risks include debris flows, slides, and hazard trees.
- Local and/or county fire agency ENGAGEMENT with the animal welfare AHJ, equestrian groups, and the Ag community is essential for planning to reduce risks to human and animal life safety and protect property.
- Stay current with advances in Animal Disaster Response at the Federal and State levels.
- Developing and maintaining relationships and engagement with all animal welfare stakeholders in your region will be your strongest pipeline to current SOGs, RESOURCES, and FUNDS.

— REDUCING RISKS —

Humans put themselves at great risk to save animals

Animal owners, their employees, and spontaneous and/or convergent volunteers all present significant risks to firefighters during evacuations.

As a trusted messenger in your community, as well as a safety stakeholder, your agency can have a big impact on risk reduction in local emergencies and complex incidents involving animals.

Steps to reduce risks to humans, animals and property

Many rural animal owners are newcomers and lack benefits of cultural/legacy knowledge. Saturate your communities with animal emergency and disaster preparedness info that includes planning guidance for:

- The importance of property accessibility, defensibility, and refugee space for animals.
- Emergency Alerts and “Know When to GO!” Awareness.
- Animal Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place.
- Educate your community about the reasons for restricting access to evacuation zones.
- Strengthen protocols that allow for early large animal evacuation and shelter resource activation.

Effective Animal Disaster Prep info must be:

- Sustainable, available, and current.
- Accessible and specific to your community demographics, languages, age groups, Tribal neighbors, and partners.
- Formatted for those with Access and Functional Needs (AFN), including vision impairment.
- Collaborative and actionable.
- Affordable and realistic.
- Address Long-Term Recovery and property access.

Increase Public Awareness of Weather Alert Levels.

When equines and large animals are involved, “Early Evac” means **BEFORE** orders are issued.

Fire Weather/Flood Watch = **READY!**

Fire Weather Warning = **SET!**

Red Flag/Flood Warnings = **GO!**

Congregate Facilities for Large Animals

are often unable to evacuate some or all animals.

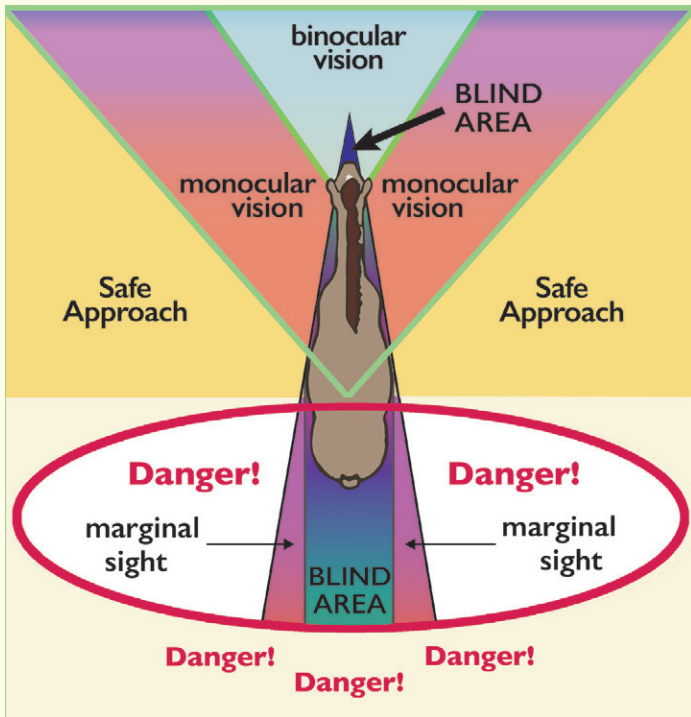
- Disaster Action Plan (DAP) includes “Know When to Go,” strong SIP resources.
- Evac planning must include traffic control, transport resource safety, communications and designated staging areas.

Production|Commercial Livestock

- Be informed about local, state/provincial or county policies and procedures for Production Agricultural property access inside Evacuation Zones.
- Engage with appropriate Ag agencies to clarify:
 - ▶ Who qualifies for access
 - ▶ Required training and credentialing
 - ▶ Who is, and who is NOT, included

Responder Safety Awareness Around Equines

ALWAYS WORK WITH A PARTNER



SIGHT

- 350 degree vision.
- Blind spots directly in front and rear.
- Eyes require several minutes to adjust from bright light to dark.
- Use red light on headlamp.
- Avoid headlights, high beams, spotlights.

HEARING AND SMELL

- Turnouts and other gear are scary.
- Approach slowly and cautiously.
- ON SCENE: Radios, sirens, helicopters, and engines are all very frightening.

FEAR

- Everything! I am a prey animal.
- Anything moving toward me fast.
- Anything coming from behind me.
- Anything I don't recognize.

DANGER ZONES

- Equines bite, and can kick from front and rear!
- Neck can swing more than 90 degrees in both directions.
- Massive heavy head.
- Powerful jaws and sharp teeth.
- Big kick zones! Legs extend to nearly full length of body.
- Rear legs can rotate laterally.
- When frightened, equines can rear up. LET GO if that happens!
- Mini horses and donkeys can bite and kick, too!



When Approaching a Horse

- Make sure it is aware of you before you start approaching.
- Approach calmly.
- Speak to the horse.
- Pause if the horse moves away.

DO NOT

- Pressure the animal.
- Approach directly from the front or rear.
- Separate buddies or mothers and babies.

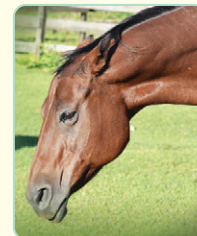


Most horses are used to being approached from their LEFT.

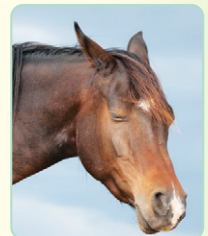
Ear Position Indicates Attitude



Forward
"Welcome!"



Back
"Don't come near me!"



Floppy
Relaxed or Unwell

In a Stall or Pen— Look Out! Watch Out!

- Keep your eyes on animal(s) at all times.
- Have a look-out or a safety partner.
- Don't get trapped in a corner.
- Close gate or stall door behind you after entering and exiting.
- Always try to release equine from a back wall, facing the door or gate.



When Leading an Equine

- Situational Awareness!!
- Stack (don't coil) lead rope in free hand.
- Don't let the horse get too far in front or behind you.



EARLY ACTIVATION = EARLY EVACUATION !

People will move equines and large animals early IF:

- Emergency Large Animal shelters are activated early (PRE-Advisory).
- They have access to transport resources.
- Resources are activated at Weather Watch or Warning Level, depending on forecast type and severity.

EDUCATE the community about evacuation route planning for different types of incidents.

ENCOURAGE local agencies and NGO stakeholders to COLLABORATE to secure facilities, develop trained volunteer shelter staff and SAFETY-TRAINED transport resources to assist those who lack private options.

Responder Safety Around Equines and Livestock

Develop local animal handler experts with All Hazards and Wildfire Safety Training. These resources can provide basic animal handling safety guidelines for First Responders as well as go-to resources during disasters.

Good resources you may have in your area might include; CART (Community Animal Response Team, FFA/Youth Ag groups, Farm Bureau, Equestrian Club(s) and Trainers, Rodeo/Horse grounds staff, Pack String operators, Mounted LEOs, College/University Equine and Animal Science programs, local ranchers.

ATR EQUIPMENT

- CDA Products: andersonsling.com
- Häst Large Animal Rescue Equipment: rescue.hastpsc.com
- Equine Training mannequins & other equipment: 4Hooves Large Animal Services, LLC: 4hoovessmart.com.
- Loops Rescue System: loopsrescue.com

ATR TRAINING

- ResQFAST: ResQFAST.com
- TLAER-Technical Large Animal Emergency Response: tlaer.org
- Animal Search & Rescue: asartraining.com
- Code3Associates: Code3Associates.org/about-training/
- Animal Rescue Training: animalrescuetraining.com

ONLINE EDUCATION & SUPPORT

- TLAER-FACEBOOK GROUP (must join to access) facebook.com/groups/73737036701/
- Equine Guelph: equineguelph.ca
- Horse Handling Videos: halterproject.org/horse-handling-videos-for-firefighters
- CVET-CA Veterinary Emergency Resonse Team: cvet.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/



Thank you to the following for source materials:

- BARTA
- CalFire
- Equine Guelph
- IAFC Ready! Set! Go! Program
- Plumas County Department of Agriculture
- UCCE – L&NR Plumas, Sierra, and Butte Counties