

HORSES AND BUSHFIRES



prepare-act-survive

Are your horses at risk if there is a fire? How many could you save, and how would you do this? Can it be done without putting people at risk?

Before you do anything else... go to the fire services website in your state and make sure that you understand the new Fire Danger Ratings .

- Design a bushfire survival plan for your family, house, property and animals
- Consider microchipping your horses: this is a permanent method of ID
- Register horses in your PIC (property identification code) with the Department of Primary Industries in your state, so that the emergency services know you are there and what stock belong on your property

Whether you stay or go:

Prepare an emergency pack now, which includes: first aid for people and horses; a torch, food and water, blankets, fire resistant clothing, a portable radio with batteries, spare halters and ropes. Check the emergency services website for suggestions on other contents of this pack.

Can you move your horses in normal circumstances?

Think carefully and seriously about whether it would be possible to move your horses even if you were not faced with fire...then decide what you COULD do in an emergency.

- Do you have too many horses to move?
- Will you have to take some and leave some? Which will you take?
- Will they load easily onto your vehicles?

If your horses must stay:

Do you have a contingency plan if it is unsafe/unwise to move your horses?

Work out the safest place at home to put your horses, if you cannot take them with you, but you must leave. Are you prepared for this? Do the family understand the consequences?

What you will need to do if your property is at risk.

If the horses will stay:

- If you must leave your horses on your property Prepare them the best you can by removing rugs, halters: or anything which might burn.
- Put them in areas with minimal vegetation; if possible provide access to dam(s).
- Leave internal gates open.
- Do **not** put horses in confined areas - i.e. avoid stables, or small yards.
- Do **not** release your horses on to roads: they will put others at risk and be in more danger themselves

IF you want to MOVE your horses..

If it is possible to move your horses to safety (by transporting them to prearranged safe areas) - remember that this needs to be done before the fire starts in your area...so your source of fire information is very important! Listen to your local ABC radio for the latest information.

If you expect to move your horses, CONSIDER:

Traffic on the roads: what route will you take?

Have you thought about road blocks in and out of the affected areas? Will you be able to get in to your horses? Take them out?

Where you will go?

Do **not** depend on the 'authorities' to provide the a safe location... Arrange for somewhere to go well in advance... Can you go to family members, friends, other horse people in distant areas?

Will your vehicles be sufficient to move your horses? Are they in good repair?

If you expect to move your horses PLAN:

When will you leave: what will be the trigger?

Will the plan be different on weekdays/weekends?

Will all members of your family leave early?

Who will go with the horses? Will anyone stay behind?

Are there pets to consider? What else will you take?

Have you considered the value of human life against the value of your horses? It is ALWAYS more important to put your own safety before the safety of your horses!