

Post Flood Equine Health Facts:

- Minimize the time horse's stand in flood water and rinse them thoroughly afterward to prevent skin infections. Monitor for signs of lameness or disease and call your vet if needed.
- Flooded barns can become unstable and collapse. Keep humans and animals out until declared safe.
- Promptly remove dangerous debris from pastures and barnyards.
- Give horse's clean hay and water during and after the flood. Hay that has been stored in flood waters can be inhabited with mold, which can cause gastrointestinal problems (colic) in the horse. Flood waters can contain pesticides and harmful substances to your horse.
- Remove any bedding, feed, manure, debris, or mud and sweeping or scrubbing stall and barn walls and floors and fencing, then use a pressure washer with a strong detergent to wash all surfaces. Some surfaces that are heavily stained might have to be scrubbed by hand.
- The next step is disinfecting the surfaces that floodwaters touched. Flood cleanup authorities say 1:10 ratio of bleach to water is readily available and one of the most economical disinfectants. The disinfectant can be used in a sprayer. It should be sprayed on all surfaces and allowed to dry--do not rinse the disinfectant off.
- Buckets and portable feeding or drinking devices need to be scrubbed, disinfected and dried. But unlike stall walls and floors, anything from which a horse will eat or drink should be rinsed after the disinfectant has dried.
- Here are some steps to clean paddocks that were flooded:
 1. Remove feces from dirt paddocks.
 2. Drag paddocks during dry times to help dry manure.
 3. Reseed bare spots.
 4. Prevent overgrazing to reduce the potential spread of equine pathogens.
 5. Check the soil pH (acidity or alkalinity) and add lime if necessary. If the pH is too low, lime will improve the pasture's fertility and help reduce pathogenic organisms.

- The waters might be receding, but horse owners in the front range and eastern plains affected by recent flooding shouldn't drop their guard against flood-related problems just yet. Owners in soggy areas should prepare for a potential surge in cases of mosquito-borne equine diseases, such as Eastern and Western equine encephalitis (EEE and WEE), West Nile virus (WNV), and equine infectious anemia (EIA). In addition, there may be an overabundance of rodents displaced by flood waters that can transmit Rabies. Make sure your horse is up to date with vaccinations against above diseases.
- A veterinarian should be summoned at first sight of early clinical signs of neurologic disease, especially in unvaccinated horses. A horse with West Nile or Rabies can portray varied neurologic signs, including apparent ataxia, loss of equilibrium, or muscle twitches, or he can exhibit sudden behavior changes or even lameness due to loss of coordination.

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