



SEEING THE WORLD *four hooves* AT A TIME

HORSEBACK

An Equine Living & Lifestyle Magazine

Volume 22, No. 7
July 2015
Priceless

TIPS

For A Healthy
Summer

DISASTER Preparedness

by Jessica Lynn

Lifestyle & More:

Barns & Garden • Real Estate Roundup

Jim Hubbard • Lew Pewterbaugh • Cathy Strobel • Jaime Jackson • Terry Myers • Linda Parelli

Horseback's Online Newspaper is your Daily News Source at www.horsebackmagazine.com

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

PLUS FIRE SEASON PRECAUTIONS AND PLANNING

By Jessica Lynn

With all of us witnessing the horror in Oklahoma last year from tornadoes and in the past weeks with the flooding in Texas and Oklahoma, I felt compelled to share this just one more time as a reminder that many people never thought it could happen to them, and it did! This has been published in several horse publications around the country previously and many horse groups have asked to share this article with their members as well.

Over the years many of us have witnessed the horrors in the south from hurricanes Katrina and Rita and more, here in the west we have had fires that spark in an instant which left many unprepared when evacuations were mandated. This article was written as a reminder that many people never thought it could

happen to them, and it did! In California we do not have the benefit of knowing that we are facing a natural disaster, with the benefit of a time frame to evacuate... earthquakes and fires just happen with no notice like in other parts of the country who face hurricanes and tornadoes where warnings can be sent in advance!

Having been through many of the worst fires in Southern California history, including the Paradise & Cedar Fires and also through the Elfin Forest/ La Costa fires, faced with evacuation orders while living in Valley Center, I am very aware of what needs to be done in preparation for fire season, and because of the fires on Camp Pendleton in 2014 which blocked evacuation routes to the major freeways and even closed down I-15, as well as shutting down the trains, making it impossible for people

to get home, coupled with the constant reminder of possible earthquakes, it reminds me that I need to stay prepared in the event of an unplanned catastrophic incident.

A REMINDER:

Always keep at least a half tank of gas at all times in tow vehicle, as well as make sure that vehicle has regular maintenance and your trailer is ready and accessible to hook up.

Now is the time to check that your trailer is in good order, air in tires, floors checked for wear and welds, and make sure brakes have been checked, etc.

Trailer train your horses (I cannot stress this one enough) so they will get in no matter what and right away, even if you don't have a trailer of your own. Borrow one, rent one, but get

it done - if your horses have to be evacuated, the emergency evacuation volunteers will only give each horse a maximum 10-15 minutes to get in and they will go to the next horse, leaving yours behind because you had not taken the time to get him to load! Many, many people in the Paradise fires had never gotten around to trailer loading and lost their animals in the fire simply because they would not get in and they were left behind! Trailer train your horses!!!! Again, I can't stress that enough - so many people in the past fires wished they had, when it was too late, and too many horses were lost or died that shouldn't have, if only their owners had taken the time to trailer train them!

HORSES:

Use a leather halter with cotton lead rope when evacuating, with metal id tag with their name and your cell phone num-

Choose Leather or Cotton over Nylon, as Nylon Can Melt on your Horse!



ber or contact number (the reason I say leather is that during a fire a nylon halter can melt on your horse's face causing severe burns and disfiguration if he were to get loose). The name tag is for easy identification and they can be purchased at most pet stores and maybe online. Or better yet, order Equistrisafe

fetlock bands with your phone number embroidered on them, easy to Velcro on in an instant, I keep mine with the leather halters and cotton lead ropes.

HAY NETS:

Fill your favorite kind of hay net for each horse; it is easier to transport than bales of hay especially

if you have limited space to haul items. A good hay net can hold more than 25 pounds of feed, enough to get you through until you can get your horses settled. Fill one for each horse you are evacuating.

WATER:

Bring at least one 5-gallon jug of water for your horses (2 would be better), and water buckets; at least you will have enough for wherever you are going and can make arrangements for more.

BUCKETS:

I bring 1 blue and 1 green large rope handle bucket for each horse, and the smaller mini size buckets for my mini's stacked in the trailer, one for food and one for water.

SUPPLEMENTS AND MEDS:

Bag up, in zip-lock bags, at least 7 days worth of supplements along with medications your horse(s) may be taking. Don't forget to bring the bucket or bowl you mix and feed these in.

EQUINE & SMALL ANIMAL FIRST AID KIT:

I always carry mine in the trailer anyway, but it is great to have gauze, vet wrap, items to treat scratches and cuts - also betadine, biozide, and any other first aid items that you usually keep on hand at home including Traumeel (tablets, crème, etc.), Arnica in 30c, 200c and 1m and a homeopathic first aid kit too if you use one.

Also include Rescue Remedy and any flower essences or essential oils that will help to calm your horse (and you!), or other people's horses, during an evacuation. Other items of value, if you use them, would be 'bute' or 'Banamine' in the paste or tablet forms, in the event that your or another person's horse would need them during any emergency when there may be

no vet available to get any. You might want to include a supply of probiotics and digestive enzymes/ aids to help prevent colic or colic-like symptoms due to the stress of evacuation and/ or change in feed stuff.

GEAR:

If you have time and space, saddles, bridles, blankets, et al.

The safest place for your horses to be in the event that you have to evacuate without them is in an arena or their own "dry" pasture/lot, that has no incendiary brush or tree limbs in or hanging over it with a trough of water and where you could throw enough hay for several days. When I lived in Valley Center the horses that were left behind and that survived were the ones the owners did not turn loose, but left them in their own pasture, or arena, some with a sprinkler turned on and water troughs full along with a bale or two of hay in the middle depending upon the number of horses.

Do not turn your horse(s) loose with a halter on; instead, if you have to turn them loose, braid an ID tag (like a leather luggage tag) into their manes, or use a permanent black water-

proof marker to put your phone number (preferably cell phone or contact number in the event of emergency) on their butts or hip, or if they have light colored hooves you can mark the number on their hoof, as they could end up any where during an evacuation and people could then try to contact you. Others have suggested a piece of duct tape with your phone number or contact number on it placed on their butts, but I don't know if it would work (may not stick or stay on).

BOARD FACILITIES/TRAINING FACILITIES:

Owner's who do not have their horses at home need to encourage the places where they stable their horses to have an evacuation/disaster preparedness plan. The facilities close to my home have them in place, owner's know where their horses will be taken in the event of evacuation, they also have people to call, and they have a plan to trailer horses out as well in the event the owner cannot get there for what ever reason to get their horse(s) out. My friend Sally who owns Tapestry Meadows also offers seminars on trailer training, where they have several types of trailers



Encourage your boarding facility to have and share their Emergency Plan with owners.



Include a two week supply of dry or wet food for your pet.

hooked up and everyone who boards with her knows their horses will get in to whatever trailer is available to get them out!

SMALL ANIMALS (CATS, DOGS, AND OTHER PETS):

- Leather collars with id tags and leashes
- Carriers for small animals, especially cats
- Two weeks worth of dry and/or wet food (I keep supplies in my horse trailer during this time of year so I don't have to worry about grabbing food and or other animal supplies, all I have to worry about are getting the animals in.
- A makeshift litter tray and cat litter (disposable aluminum roasting pans work great!)
- A hand can opener
- Assorted bowls and plastic dishes and a bucket for water
- A blanket or two, or towels to cover the carriers or for your pets to sleep on

Make friends with your neighbors; someone in your neighborhood might be able to get your animals out if they know you have them and if you cannot get home to get them yourself. What you find during disasters is that people want to help if they can, especially with rescuing animals. Make sure a trusted neighbor has a key to your house so they could get in to

get your pets.

Also have a sign in the window or posted on a front door or one of the Animal Aura emergency signs you post one a fence or gate which evacuation people or responders would know how many pets you have and if they are cats, dogs, iguanas, parrots, or whatever, so that rescue people will know there are pets to rescue. Pets will hide during a disaster and rescuers may not know they are there - unless you have a sign posted, they won't know to look for them, or how many, lessening their chances of survival, www.animalauras.com of Aguanga has one of the best signs for all animals..

More importantly, and most of all be prepared, be calm and help your neighbors if you can in the event of evacuation. Get their work numbers and share yours, have a neighborhood phone list with emergency numbers and cell phone numbers. Have a key to your truck and trailer hidden in a safe place that one of your neighbors knows about. If they have time, they can maybe help get your animals out if you aren't there. Have neighborhood meetings on disaster preparedness. We do, and everyone in our neighborhood has a plan. We have a central staging area, we have emergency sup-

plies and 5,000 gallons of well water storage. We also make sure we have two weeks extra worth of hay stored at all times, enough dog and cat food for two weeks, and enough dry food for several people, just in case - and propane to cook on a bar-b-que as well as heat with a small propane house approved heater like Big Buddy, candles, matches, and extra batteries.

Your area, be it county, city or state, probably has Disaster Preparedness plans on line or they can mail them to you for more complete information and suggestions. The Red Cross would also be another source for written info to be prepared for a disaster such as fires.

Take care of your horses, cats, dogs and other animals, but more importantly take care of yourself! Get your valuables and get out - your life is not worth trying to save material things that can be replaced - your life cannot, and your family will be devastated! Everything you have is replaceable except your family and your animals!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jessica Lynn is the owner of Earth Song Ranch, a business specializing in designing, manufacturing and distributing natural equine, canine and feline nutritional supplements. Earth Song Ranch is passionate about natural health for our animals and also offers blends with wild crafted and organic herbs, herbal wormers, homeopathic remedies, nosodes, and educational articles on the website. Jessica has been involved in holistic and alternative health for humans and animals for well over 4 decades. For more information please visit the Earth Song Ranch web site at www.earthsongranch.com.

Jessica Lynn, Earth Song Ranch
PO Box 482, Aguanga, CA 92536
jessica@earthsongranch.com
951-514-9700