

PHHVV is a non-profit organisation committed to providing hope for Victorian equines through education, rehabilitation and advocacy.

## PHHVV INFO NOTE – EQUINE BUSH FIRE PLANS

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### DOES YOUR BUSHFIRE PLAN INCLUDE YOUR HORSE?

Planning for a bushfire should include pets and other livestock. Horses and other domesticated livestock present their own planning challenges, because of their size, temperament and the numbers in which they are kept. Our smaller household pets we can easily put in the house or the car - but not so our horses.

The following are a few observations of my own gained from a little first hand experience:

- Frightening to horses, emergency vehicles, especially helicopters dumping water, may pose more of a risk than the actual fire. Emergency services personnel will, quite rightly, protect property and human life and will probably be unable to consider your horses in the process.
- Sum up your own situation - type and number of horses; horse/fire safe facilities; whether you are surrounded by bush or open paddock.
- Be flexible and use commonsense. It is possible the fire might start so close you won't have time to put your initial plan in place.
- Generally don't consider letting horses onto the road. Do consider opening gates between paddocks and/or between neighbours.
- Have a plan for after the fire - emergency treatment and housing.

Excellent information is widely available from local councils, the CFA and the Department of Primary Industry which can assist property owners in developing a plan to protect property and human life. Horse owners can refer to an agricultural note entitled "Horses and Bushfires" written by Dr. Patricia Ellis and Hilary Pope, DPI, Attwood, which provides valuable information on what to consider when planning for horses. Or Click here to view article in PDF.

The Australian Horse Industry Council has a Horse Emergency Contact Database (HECD). It is free to register online and in cases of emergency relevant authorities will contact you by SMS or e-mail. They will have emergency bulletins and industry news items at all time on their web site. The direct link for HECD visit <http://www.horsecouncil.org.au/content.asp?z=12>

#### Useful Links

Australian Horse Industry Council	<a href="http://www.horsecouncil.org.au">www.horsecouncil.org.au</a>
Department of Primary Industries	<a href="http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/farming/horses">www.dpi.vic.gov.au/farming/horses</a>
Department of Sustainability and Environment	<a href="http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/fires/">www.dse.vic.gov.au/fires/</a>
Country Fire Authority	<a href="http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/">www.cfa.vic.gov.au/</a>