



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

If you own or come into contact with horses, ponies or donkeys YOU NEED TO READ THIS

Horses in New South Wales and Queensland have tested positive for equine influenza (horse flu).

Whether you have horses or not, you need to be aware of what this means for you.

People and equipment spread the disease

- Don't move (or ride) any horses from your property without a permit.
- Keep horses away from your boundary fences and adjoining horse properties.
- Prevent all non-essential vehicles and visitors from entering areas of the premises that hold horses.
- After horses, the biggest risk of spreading influenza is people. Wash all exposed skin and hair with soap and hot water.
- Always decontaminate yourself and your vehicle before leaving your property. Do not go near any horses on other properties.
- Change your clothes, including hat and footwear, immediately after handling horses, and decontaminate them. Use hot water, soap, disinfectant, detergent or household bleach.
- Remember, you are protecting everyone else's animals as well as your own.

Please adhere strictly to the movement restrictions as they apply to your area, and do not move your horses off your property unless you have the necessary permit.

This applies equally to the racing industry and recreational horse, pony, and donkey owners.

There is no risk to human health.

Movement restrictions

NSW and the ACT: There is a total movement standstill in place indefinitely. The standstill will remain in place until otherwise notified. All horse events have been cancelled.

NSW: For more information and to report outbreaks phone 1800 675 888 or visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/equine-influenza

ACT: For more information phone 1800 234 002 or visit www.tams.act.gov.au To obtain a permit to move horses in the ACT phone 6207 8705.

Queensland: Movement restrictions are in place for Queensland. The movement of horses is not permitted in the restricted area in south-east Queensland. For the latest permit requirements and horse restrictions phone 132 523 or visit www.dpi.qld.gov.au

Horse registration

All horse owners should register their horse ownership details (and receive e-updates on the EI outbreak) at:

Queensland: www.dpi.qld.gov.au/equine-influenza

New South Wales: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/equine-influenza

The disease represents significant costs to the industry and all horse owners. Economic impacts include large veterinary bills, loss of business and employment. Equine influenza can also seriously affect foal mortality rates. If we do not work together now to eradicate the disease there will be additional costs for the horse industry to bear for many years to come.

Equine influenza is a highly contagious respiratory disease, so it is important to prevent your horses having any direct or indirect contact with other people's horses.

It is important you follow good hygiene practices to prevent the further spread of this disease.

Under a nationally agreed response, the Australian Government and the New South Wales and Queensland Governments are working hard to control this disease in New South Wales and Queensland, with support from industry, veterinarians and other organisations, but your day-to-day assistance is just as important.

What is equine influenza?

Equine influenza (EI) is an acute, highly contagious, viral disease which can cause rapidly spreading outbreaks of respiratory disease in horses, donkeys, mules and other equine species. EI is exotic to Australia and will have a major impact on all horse sectors if it establishes here.

How is EI spread?

The disease is easily spread by:

- direct contact between infected and susceptible horses
- indirect contact with contaminated tack or equipment
- susceptible horses occupying buildings or vehicles recently occupied by diseased horses
- contact between contaminated horse handlers and healthy horses.

Important! This disease is easily spread on your skin, clothing and equipment. Take the time to clean and disinfect yourself and your gear.

How can I tell if my horse has EI?

The main clinical signs of EI are usually a sudden increase in temperature (to between 39°C and 41°C); a deep, dry, hacking cough; and a watery nasal discharge, which may later become thick and smelly.

Other signs can include depression, loss of appetite, laboured breathing, and muscle pain and stiffness.

Few adult horses die of the disease but it can kill young foals. Recovery usually occurs after a couple of weeks but horses need to be rested for a further period to avoid complications.

What is the treatment for EI?

There is no specific treatment other than rest and supportive treatment for the fever and cough.

Horses that are worked or stressed while sick or during recovery may develop secondary bacterial bronchitis or bronchopneumonia and die.

Horses should be rested for at least one week for every day of coughing eg. if the horse coughs for 5 days, rest it for 5 weeks.

How do I disinfect my gear?

Equine influenza virus can easily be killed by thorough cleaning and disinfection of potentially contaminated hands, arms, clothing, tack and other equipment. Bleach, diluted as per the manufacturer's recommendation, is a suitable disinfectant.

Where can I get more information?

Phone the national hotline on **1800 234 002** (8am - 8pm daily) or visit www.outbreak.gov.au

The 'Outbreak' website is a central point of information and has links and phone numbers for your local department of primary industries.

If you would like to receive daily email updates register on the Australian Horse Industry Council emergency contact database at www.horsecouncil.org.au