



Diseases of Horses Notifiable in Victoria

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Which diseases of horses must be notified?

How soon must they be notified?

Who do I notify?

The *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* provides for the monitoring and control of livestock diseases in Victoria.

The contagious or infectious diseases and conditions which may affect horses referred to in this Note are declared as notifiable diseases for the purpose of the *Livestock Disease Control Act*. Likewise, the reporting and record keeping requirements are also in accordance with that Act and Regulations made under it.

Notifiable Diseases

Diseases Requiring Immediate Notification

- African Horse Sickness
- Borna Disease
- Contagious equine metritis
- Epizootic lymphangitis
- Equine babesiosis
- Equine encephalosis
- Equine influenza
- Glanders
- Japanese encephalitis
- Louping ill
- Rabies
- Screw worm fly
- Surra (*Trypanosoma evansi*)
- Trichinellosis
- Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis
- Vesicular stomatitis
- Warble fly infestation
- West Nile virus clinical infection
- Western equine encephalomyelitis

Diseases which must be reported within 12 hours

- Anthrax
- Equine herpes-virus 1 (abortigenic and neurological strains)
- Cattle tick

Diseases which must be reported within 7 days

- Equine infectious anaemia
- Equine piroplasmosis
- Equine viral arteritis
- Leptospirosis
- Listeriosis
- Salmonellosis
- Verocytotoxigenic *E. coli*

Notification can be made by telephone to the District Veterinarian or Animal Health Officer at your local Department of Primary Industries or to

The Disease Watch Hotline 1800 675 888

However, a person need not report the diseases listed if, the horse has been attended by a private or government veterinary practitioner, or if appropriate diagnostic specimens obtained from the horse are submitted to a registered veterinary diagnostic laboratory.

Where only attended by a veterinary practitioner, the veterinary practitioner must report the suspicion or presence of disease, but where specimens are submitted to a registered veterinary diagnostic laboratory, the laboratory becomes responsible for reporting.

These arrangements are to overcome multiple reporting and recording of disease incidents.

Who is Obligated to Report a Notifiable Disease?

A person knowing or having reason to suspect that a disease is present in horses or horse products:-

1. owned by that person or in the possession, control or charge of that person;
2. on land owned and occupied by that person; or
3. dealt with by that person as a veterinary practitioner, an inspector under the *Meat Industry Act 1993* or the *Export Control Act 1982*, operator of a meat processing facility licensed under the *Meat Industry Act 1993* where a quality assurance program is in force, the owner or person in charge of premises registered as a veterinary diagnostic laboratory, knacker, stock agent or other person dealing with livestock, livestock

products or hives by way of a profession, trade or business, must report the disease.

How Long Must Records Relating to Diseases be Retained?

An owner of livestock and a veterinary practitioner must retain any documents evidencing the suspicion or presence of a disease or exotic disease in livestock for a period of 7 years from the time the presence of the endemic or exotic disease was identified.

Confidentiality of Information

All notifications to the Department of Primary Industries are normally dealt with in the strictest confidence unless the owner authorises the release of the information.

Information about the disease status of a property or herd can only be released if the Secretary of the Department determines that release of the information is in the public interest eg. if public health or international trade is compromised.

Disease Investigations

Early detection of exotic disease is extremely important, and any horses with unusual signs should be reported to the nearest private or government veterinary officer.

There are no Government charges for exotic animal disease investigations, including negative diagnoses.

Further Information

Further information on these or related matters may be obtained from:

Dr Nicky Stone
03 5336 6796 or 0409 947 942

Acknowledgement

The original author of this Information Note was Dr Patricia Ellis, and the previous version was published in February 1998.

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