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## NY Reporting Requirements for Equine Herpes Virus Infection

Control of infectious disease represents a year-round commitment for veterinarians, horsepersons, racetrack management and regulatory officials. In New York State, the first few months of the year are of particular concern due to dramatic changes in weather, as well as environmental conditions at racetracks and training centers that may require horses of varying immune status, health, and age to be in close contact. Such conditions are an ideal environment for the transmission of infectious diseases.

Upper airway pathogens can spread among horses by:

- Direct nose-to-nose contact
- Aerosolization
- Indirect contact through carriers, such as people and equipment

Such pathogens can have serious impact on New York's horse population, and may require implementation of quarantine measures.

The recent confirmed case of Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy (EHM) at Belmont Park underscores the need to make prevention of infectious disease a high priority.

Equine Herpes Virus-1 (EHV-1) is known to cause mild to fatal neurological disease in horses of all ages, particularly horses of racing age. Clinical signs of EHV-1/EHM infection may include:

- Fever,
- Coughing,
- Nasal discharge,
- Variable enlargement of the lymph nodes beneath or behind the jaw,
- Depression,
- Loss of appetite,
- Urine retention or dribbling,
- Weakness, incoordination, wobbly gait, and recumbency with inability to rise.

Because of the highly contagious nature of this disease and the degree of inter-state shipment of horses throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, EHM arguably represents the most significant threat to the racehorse population of New York racetracks. For this reason, **equine rhinopneumonitis (EHV-1, EHV-4, EHM) is a reportable disease in New York (Agriculture and Markets Law, Article 5, §73) that requires immediate notification of the New York Department of Ag and Markets – as soon as confirmed or suspected.**

In practical terms, any horse with a fever and neurologic signs (weakness, incoordination, wobbly gait or recumbent and unable to rise) represents a suspect case of EHM. These horses should be tested for Equine herpes virus infection by a veterinarian and reported to the NY Division of Animal Industry immediately.

Any individual (veterinarian, trainer, owner, groom, etc.) may report a suspected or confirmed case of Equine Rhinopneumonitis by calling the New York Division of Animal industry at 518-457-3502.