



For Immediate Release
February 14, 2020

Horse Confirmed with EHM in Texas

AUSTIN, TX – The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) received confirmation of Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy (EHM), the neurologic disease linked to Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1), in a hunter jumper horse visiting Texas from Wyoming.

The EHM positive horse traveled to Katy, Texas to participate in a hunter jumper event that began on January 29. The infected horse has not visited any other events in Texas.

The infected horse was immediately isolated and quickly relocated to a Brazos County veterinary hospital for care after showing signs of ataxia and other neurologic signs consistent with EHM.

Horses that were known to have come in direct contact with the infected horse were in an isolated area of the facility, and the directly exposed horses are now under quarantine and veterinary monitoring.

"TAHC veterinarians are in direct contact with event organizers to ensure participants are notified and enhanced biosecurity measures are being taken," said Dr. Susan Rollo, State Epidemiologist. "I believe the attentiveness and quick actions taken by the event veterinarian and staff will help contain the disease and mitigate the risk of spread."

Owners of horses that attended the event are encouraged to take precautions.

- Clean and disinfect tack, boots, equipment, and grooming supplies.
- When you return to your farm, isolate the horses that attended the event for at least two weeks.
- Have their temperatures monitored twice daily for at least 14 days after last known exposure. If a fever or other signs consistent with EHM develop, contact your veterinarian.
- When doing feeding and chores, work with the returning horses last, wear booths and coveralls, and remove them before working with your other horses.
- Don't forget to wash your hands.

Owners should work with their veterinary practitioners to establish appropriate monitoring and diagnostic plans for any potentially exposed horse(s). For more information on biosecurity measures you can take to keep your horses healthy, visit

https://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_BiosecurityEquine.pdf.

One of the most common clinical signs of EHV-1 is fever, which often precedes the development of other signs. Respiratory signs include coughing and nasal discharge. Neurologic signs associated with EHM are highly variable, but often the hindquarters are most severely affected.



Horses with EHM may appear weak and uncoordinated, urine dribbling and loss of tail tone may also be seen. Severely affected horses may become unable to rise. For more information on EHM please visit

https://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_EquineHerpesMyeloencephalopathy.pdf

It is important to remember these signs are not specific to EHM and diagnostic testing is required to confirm EHV-1 infection. Many horses exposed to EHV-1 never develop clinical signs. If you suspect your horse has been exposed to EHV-1, contact your local veterinarian.

The equine industry is encouraged to obtain the latest information on this outbreak and other disease events across the country by visiting the Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC) website, <http://www.equinediseasecc.org/alerts/outbreaks>. Additional Texas EHM cases will be posted on the EDCC.

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The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) was established in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission and charged with protecting the state's domestic animals "from all contagious or infectious diseases of a malignant character." TAHC remains true to this charge while evolving with the times to protect the health and marketability of all Texas livestock and poultry. Learn more about the TAHC by visiting www.tahc.texas.gov.