

Atlantic Provinces Harness Racing Commission	Commission des courses attelées des provinces de l'Atlantique
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NOTICE TO THE INDUSTRY

Date: JUNE 26, 2018

Re: HEAT EXHAUSTION

HEAT EXHAUSTION & THE HORSE

In view of the hot weather forecast for the next few days, the Atlantic Provinces Harness Racing Commission wishes to point out the long-standing practices that were established to protect horses racing in all conditions – from extreme cold to hot weather. These initiatives included providing information to licensees on what to look for and what actions to take in weather extremes.

In weather such as is being forecast for the next few days, the APHRC advises horse people and officials to be on alert for any hot weather effects on horses. Racetracks should maintain adequate water facilities to cool down horses after racing.

In addition, racing officials will remind participants at racetracks to take the necessary precautions and steps to cool horses. This information is found on APHRC posters that were produced and are displayed in racetrack paddocks, test barns and the race office.

As well, racing officials have an established policy of allowing a trainer to scratch their horse should the trainer be concerned about the particular condition of the animal due to weather.

Trainers, grooms and other hands-on licensees are front line participants in efforts to protect the health of the horse in weather extremes.

The protection of the health and welfare of the horse is a vital concern to the APHRC and to members of the racing community. An effort to monitor the horse in weather extremes is in keeping with this mandate.

Dr. Paul Hogan
Director of Racing
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HEAT EXHAUSTION ACTION PLAN

Heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

This is a severe and potentially fatal illness associated with a marked increase in body temperature, usually as a result of intense exercise in hot, humid weather.

Dehydration.

This compounds the problem and horses on diuretics may be more vulnerable.

Watch for:

- A rectal temperature over 40 degrees C (may continue to rise post-exercise)
- Shallow or rapid breathing
- Horse appears weak and disoriented and may stagger
- Muscle tremors and spasms
- Collapse and/or seizure

Heat exhaustion is an emergency situation!

Take action:

- Get lots of cool water on the horse. Scrape off and repeat continuously until the horse's rectal temperature falls below 39.5 degrees C.
- Get the horse out of the sun and into a well-ventilated area.
- Apply ice packs to the head and neck.
- Call your veterinarian.