



About The Native America Humane Society

The Native America Humane Society (NAHS) is composed of tribal members and their allies assisting tribal communities to resolve their challenges with animals. NAHS acts as the bridge between tribal communities and animal welfare service providers, NGOs, foundations, and other agencies. Our mission is to empower Native communities to become healthier, happier and safer by providing information, support and resources for animal care programs in Indian country.



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Serving Tribal Communities

Our Responsibility Caring For Your Horses

Horses have been part of our communities for thousands of years. We rely on them for companionship, recreation, sport, and ceremony. They also may have the capacity to help us heal as recent research shows that having an animal improves our emotional wellbeing. For their loyalty and friendship, it is our responsibility as horse owners to ensure that the horses in our lives receive the care they deserve.



Caring For Your Horses



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Keeping Our Families and Horses Safe

Though many of our communities have long standing beliefs and traditions about how horses are kept, changing times and population growth resulting in larger towns and villages on reservations are encouraging us to transition to horse ownership in ways that improve community health and safety. Since horses by nature are social "herd" animals, horses kept alone will likely get out to find other horses, which can contribute to accidents. Safe fencing can consist of many materials, such as smooth twisted wire, wood boards or poles, pre-made steel panels, or electric tape. Barbed wire is not recommended for horses due to the danger of lacerations. Do not use unsafe or unsteady materials such as pallets or other building debris. Metal t-posts should be capped (some people like to use old cowboy boots!) for safety, as well.

To protect your horses, they should be kept in a sturdy pen or pasture. A shelter should be provided, and the size of the shelter should be appropriate for the number of horses expected to use it. A good rule of thumb is 100-144 square feet per average 1000 pound horse.

Depending on the climate, the shelter should protect them from rain, snow, sun and wind. It should also be large enough to protect from bugs if they are bad in your area. A dry lot or paddock should provide a minimum of 400 square feet per horse, and pastures should be 1-2 acres per horse to provide



adequate grazing. Shelters and paddocks should be cleaned regularly. Pastures should be rotated, or the manure dragged to allow it to dry to kill parasites.

NEVER leave an unattended horse tethered or tied, as serious injuries could result.

- Water troughs with fresh water in all seasons! Snow is not an appropriate source of water for domesticated horses. Dehydration can lead to serious medical conditions.
- Extra hay during winter time provides more fuel for the "furnace" that is the horse's gut, and provides more warmth. Grain is not always necessary, but extra nutrition should be provided to young, growing horses, mares that are in foal or lactating, and horses who are underweight. A vitamin-mineral supplement may be recommended if hay is not of adequate quality.

Providing Veterinary Health Care for Your Horse

Veterinary medical professionals recommend that horses have yearly veterinary exams to monitor their health and to provide care as needed including preventative vaccines, fecal exams, Coggins (EIA) and other tests, and preventive prescriptions. Horses should also have a yearly dental examination, and have dental floating performed if necessary. This is a procedure that reduces sharp points that develop, allowing the horse to continue to eat comfortably.

- Basic equine vaccines include tetanus, Eastern and Western Encephalitis, West Nile Virus, and Rabies
- Fecal exams should be done twice yearly, with deworming based on the results of this testing
- Consider getting your horse microchipped so he/she can be identified and returned to you if lost.
- Another common belief in some of our communities is that it is unfair to animals to have them altered so they cannot reproduce. However, an ungelded male horse (stallion) can be extremely dangerous and is rarely appropriate as a family horse. There are also many unwanted horses across the country, and gelding your stallion so he can't reproduce is an important part of the solution to this problem.



Signs of Illness, Neglect or Intentional Abuse

Research shows that if an animal is being abused, there is likely child abuse, domestic violence, or other forms of violence occurring within the family. 36.8% of boys and 29.4% of girls who were victims of physical and sexual abuse and domestic violence have been reported to abuse their family pet (including horses).

Possible signs include:

Neglected Appearance of Animal

- Dull hair coat; thin (ribs showing, sunken in flanks); hair loss, coat coated in feces or urine; mange.
- Medical symptoms include diarrhea; chronic cough; heavy lice or tick infestation, bare or missing ear tips; untreated open sores or wounds; large tumors; halter imbedded in skin; chronic lameness; poor hoof condition.
- Listless, depressed behavior

Poor or Negligent Housing Conditions

- No food or water or food spoiled
- No shelter from elements

Any suspected animal abuse, neglect, or intentional acts of cruelty should be reported to local animal control or law enforcement immediately. When animal abuse is taken seriously, communities are safer for every member of the family.

See our website for more information on the link between human violence and animal abuse:

www.nativeamericahumane.org/endviolence

