

April 15, 2024

EQUINE MEDICAL ADVISORY RE: EQUINE HERPES VIRUS AT BUFFALO RACEWAY

On April 6, 2024, a Standardbred racehorse was shipped from Buffalo Raceway to a training center in Ohio by a private carrier in a two-horse trailer. This horse was accompanied by a horse ridden by an outrider at Buffalo Raceway. The Standardbred racehorse developed neurologic symptoms shortly after arrival at the Ohio training center, became unable to stand and was euthanized. A nasopharyngeal swab from this horse tested positive for Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1).

On April 10, the training center in Ohio was placed under a 21-day quarantine. Prior to the issue of that quarantine order, the outrider's horse was shipped back to Buffalo Raceway and stabled in Barn G along with 36 racehorses for approximately six hours. When notified of the quarantine of the training facility in Ohio, the outrider removed the horse from Barn G and returned it to the Ohio training center where that horse is now under quarantine. This horse currently does not have a fever and has not shown any clinical signs of illness.

To prevent potential spread of the virus to other horses stabled at Buffalo Raceway, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets imposed a 14-day quarantine for horses stabled in Barn G at Buffalo Raceway on April 10, 2024 and performed a site visit on April 12, 2024. Accordingly:

- All the horses in Barn G will be monitored carefully for clinical signs of illness and have their temperatures recorded twice daily during the quarantine period.
- Horses in Barn G will not be allowed to race or train in the company of horses stabled elsewhere in the Buffalo Raceway barn area.
- Horses in Barn G will be allowed to train on the racetrack after normal training hours are completed for the general horse population.
- No horses in Barn G will be allowed to leave the racetrack and no new horses will be allowed to enter Barn G during the period of the quarantine.
- Appropriate biosecurity measures will be enforced by Buffalo Raceway Security personal and will remain in place for 14 days.

EHV-1 is a common viral infection that can cause respiratory disease, abortion in pregnant mares, and neurological disease. The virus does not affect people. EHV-1 may be spread by close contact with infected horses or by contact with objects contaminated by an infected horse (e.g., tack or grooming equipment, water and feed buckets, clothing, footwear of stable employees, etc.). The incubation period for this virus is from 24 hours – 10 days.

Staff from the Commission and the Department of Agriculture and Markets are working with the trainers and racetrack operators to identify and locate additional horses that may have been in contact with the index case while it was stabled in New York prior to being shipped to Ohio.

Providing that none of the horses currently under quarantine in Barn G develop fevers, show clinical signs of EHV-1, or are otherwise diagnosed with EHV-1, the quarantine will be lifted on April 24, 2024.

The Commission authorized Buffalo Raceway to resume live racing on April 12 with unaffected horses that are currently on the grounds of the racetrack and not in quarantine as well as horses that may ship into the Buffalo Raceway stable area to race and return.

Trainers, owners, and caretakers who believe their horses may have been potentially exposed to EHV-1 should follow these guidelines:

- Check and record your horses' temperature twice a day for ten days. The incubation period for EHV-1 may range from 24 hours to 10 days from the time of exposure to an infected horse.
- Look for clinical signs of illness, including fever (rectal temp greater than 101.5 F), coughing, nasal discharge, depression, incoordination, or wobbly gait, dribbling urine, poor tail tone or difficulty in standing. If any of these signs are seen, call your veterinarian immediately.
- There are multiple tests for EHV-1 infection. At this time, the preferred test for EHV-1 is a PCR test performed on nasal swab and blood samples. The decision to test a horse that is not showing clinical signs of disease should not be taken lightly. Due to the ubiquitous nature of EHV-1, many horses will test positive for presence of the virus and not develop the disease. Clinically normal horses that test positive for EHV-1 will be placed in quarantine for up to 21 days.
- Rigorous biosecurity measures, as outlined by veterinarians from the NY State Department of Agriculture & Markets must be followed throughout the quarantine period.

As of April 15, 2024, there have been no new cases of EHV-1 identified in the horses quarantined in G Barn at Buffalo Raceway. The quarantine procedures are subject to change as both the Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Gaming Commission continue to monitor the situation at Buffalo Raceway closely and may modify restrictions based on conditions on-site and/or new information.

For more information on EHV-1 and details for quarantine procedures, see [the American Association of Equine Practitioner's Web site](#) or the [USDA APHIS' brochure on the virus](#).

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