

# Horse Boarding - Application & Information

PJR-036

❖ **Purpose:** The purpose of this form is to identify the information and materials required for a Horse Boarding Zoning Permit. ❖

**Background:** Horse boarding is the keeping and training of horses which are not owned by the occupant or owner of a property. Horse boarding includes the giving of private lessons (one trainer/one student at a time). Horse boarding facilities which meet the definition of a "commercial stable" under the Zoning Code (i.e. group lessons, riding academies, shows, clinics, etc.) require a Use Permit. The Zoning Code allows horse boarding facilities only in the following zoning districts: Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA), Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA), Diverse Agriculture (DA), Resources and Rural Development (RRD), Resources and Rural Development/Agriculture Preserve (RRD/WA), and Agriculture and Residential (AR).

On parcels two (2) acres or smaller, the number of horses allowed on a parcel, including horses owned by the occupant and/or horses boarded, is limited to one (1) horse per twenty thousand (20,000) square feet of area (approximately ½ acre) regardless of zoning district.

On parcels exceeding two acres (except the AR district), there is no limitation of the number of horses boarded and/or owned by the occupant or property.

Parcels designated AR are limited to five boarded horses, unless a Use Permit is requested and approved.

**Procedure:** After a complete application is submitted, a project planner is assigned to the project. The project planner reviews the proposal to determine if it conforms to criteria related to parcel size, number of horses, inclusion of riding lessons, use of riding arenas, restroom facilities, setbacks, parking areas and driveway entrances, manure management, and vector control. Additional information and/or a site inspection may be required before the project planner can approve the project. The project planner will approve the zoning permit if all the criteria are met or may deny the zoning permit if criteria cannot be met and/or if the site cannot support the use. The administrative determination may be appealed to the Board of Zoning Adjustments by the applicant or the public within ten (10) calendar days of the written determination by filing a letter of appeal and paying the appropriate appeal fee (see the current Project Review Fee Schedule).

## APPLICATION MATERIALS:

1. **Applications.** Completed Zoning Permit application form [PJR-004](#), and Indemnification Agreement form [PJR-011](#).
2. **Proposal Statement.** This should be a letter fully describing the proposed facility's hours of operation, the maximum number of horses to be boarded, and the maximum number of employees. Discuss changes in noise, traffic and site appearance that will result from the proposal, quantified where possible. Indicate any planned future use beyond the present proposal.

Describe how the horse boarding facility is constructed to prevent clean water (e.g. rain water) from being contaminated by manure. Roof gutters, downspouts, and drains should be installed to prevent "clean" roof water from being contaminated by mixing with manure. Clean water should be diverted around barns, manure storage areas, and paddocks. Areas of high manure concentrations should be roofed or covered.

Describe prevention measures that will be implemented to protect any riparian corridors or waterways on the site. Horses must be kept out of streams and streambanks to prevent erosion and direct deposit of manure. Fencing may be required to exclude horses from entering these areas. Other sources of water and shade should be provided to horses.

**Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department**

2550 Ventura Avenue ❖ Santa Rosa, CA ❖ 95403-2829 ❖ (707) 565-1900 ❖ Fax (707) 565-1103

Describe pasture rotation and management. Cross fences are recommended to divide pastures to graze in rotation to allow re-growth of grasses. It is recommended that during the growing season, grazing be allowed until grass reaches a height of 3 to 4 inches at which point horses should be moved to allow re-growth to 6 to 8 inches before returning horses to pasture.

3. **Site Plan.** An 8 ½" x 11" or larger site plan, drawn to scale. Site plans must include, at a minimum, the information required on the Minimum Standard Site Plan, form [CSS-019](#).

Note: The Zoning Code requires water troughs, feed troughs, accessory buildings used for housing and maintaining horses, and other livestock to be located 50 feet from the front property line, 20 feet from any side or rear property line, and 30 feet from any dwelling on an adjacent property. Clearly indicate such buildings and setbacks on the site plan.

4. **Manure management plan and stormwater runoff prevention methods.**

- a) Maintenance: Describe the maintenance of paddocks and/or stalls including the schedule and method of manure removal. Clean up of manure piles and soiled bedding should be done on a daily basis in highly populated areas. Include methods to prevent stormwater runoff from carrying manure and other contamination from paddocks and pastures into waterways.

- b) Containment/Storage: Describe the construction of manure storage area(s). Horse manure must be stored on an impervious surface and under cover during rains to prevent leaching or runoff. In general, storage areas should be located at least 100 feet from any creeks, streams, drainage channels, or waterways to maintain water quality.

- c) Pasture Fertilization: If manure is spread on pastures to provide fertilization describe the amount, method of spreading, and times of the year when spreading will occur.

- d) Disposal: Describe how horse manure will be disposed. Horse manure can be hauled off site or composted for soil amendment. Compost piles must be kept moist to control dust and well aerated to control odor. If used to fertilize pasture, application should be done only in late spring or summer months to prevent runoff.

5. **Vector Management Plan.** Detail how feed, waste, standing water (water troughs), and other items attractive to vectors (rodents, flies, mosquitos, etc.) will be handled to ensure that vectors are controlled. Feed/grain areas should be covered and swept, droppings should be picked up daily, and manure piles should be routinely turned or tilled into pastures to prevent fly breeding areas. Automatic fly spray devices or strips are also recommended in barn areas. To prevent mosquito infestations, all standing water (such as water troughs) should be stocked with mosquito fish as recommended by the Marin/Sonoma Mosquito & Vector Control District.

6. **Restroom Facilities.** Restroom facilities are not required for pasture-only facilities where there are no buildings and where people are on site for less than 2 hours.

If the facility includes, barns, stables, a single family residence, riding arena or other buildings a restroom facility will be required. An existing residential bathroom may be used if it meets accessibility criteria, including path of travel, door width, size, etc. (refer to the current building code). The use of an existing bathroom is also dependent on the septic system meeting the current standards for the proposed use. Please refer to Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) Policies and Procedures, Number [9-4-10](#), *Horse Boarding Facilities & Riding Arenas*.

7. **Parking Areas and Driveway Entrance.** Parking areas are required for clients. If people boarding horses are allowed to park their trailers on site, a specific area must be designated for that purpose. If parking areas or access to the parking is unpaved, please discuss how dust shall be controlled. An area for loading and unloading of horses shall be provided onsite as no loading or unloading of horses shall take place from horse vans or trailers parked on any public roadway. Provide details of the facility's driveway entrance

which may need to be improved.

8. **Accessibility.** Shall meet State accessibility requirements which includes accessibility of parking, path of travel from parking to bathrooms, drinking fountains and other public areas including but not limited to viewing areas grandstands, offices and classrooms.
9. **Agricultural Exempt Structures.** Buildings constructed as Agricultural Exempt Structures (Group U Occupancies per Section 312.1 of the California Building Code) cannot be used in the horse boarding operation. These buildings are agricultural buildings as defined in Section 202 of the California Building Code and cannot be used for human habitation or used by the public. (Sonoma County Code Sections 7-7 and 13-25). If the horse boarding proposal includes the use of Agricultural Exempt Structures, the project will be conditioned to require the conversion of the building to a fully permitted building.
10. **Note:** Additional permits may be required including, but not limited to, building, septic, and encroachment permits.
11. **Filing Fee:** See the current PRMD Project Review Fee Schedule.

#### REFERENCE GUIDES:

It is recommended by PRMD, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Department of Fish and Game that anyone keeping horses use the following guidelines. These guidelines provide important information related to facility design and siting, manure management and stormwater prevention plans, pasture (grazing rotation) management, daily paddock care, and protection techniques for waterways.

"Appropriate Animal Waste Management Guidelines" - developed by the Sonoma-Marin Animal Waste Committee, 1992 (attached).

"Horse Owner's Guide to Water Quality Protection" - developed by the Council of Bay Area Resource Conservation District (Available as a separate handout at PRMD or at the Resource Conservation District Petaluma office). <http://www.sanmateorcd.org/links/HorseWQ1.pdf>

"Horse Boarding Facilities & Riding Arenas" - Permit and Resource Management Department Policies and Procedures, Number [9-4-10](#); published June 2, 2006.

# ***Appropriate Animal Waste Management Guidelines:***

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## **Containment and Reuse of Manure from Confined Animal Facilities**

Sonoma-Marin Animal Waste Committee (1)

1992

### **PREAMBLE**

The streams and waterways of Marin and Sonoma Counties provide many miles of diverse aquatic and riparian habitats for a wide array of fish and wildlife species, some of which are legally classified as threatened or endangered. Streams which once supported steelhead and silver salmon are no longer able to support these species because of diversion and contamination of remaining flows. The birds and mammals which are dependent upon streams for food and water also suffer when streams are polluted by animal wastes. These waterways also convey water to homes and farms of the region. The quality of this water is critical for the health and welfare of people and food producing animals as well.

The Marin-Sonoma Animal Waste Committee hereby provides the following recommendations and guidelines for design, operation and management of confined animals and their wastes in an attempt to improve conservation of the water and soil resources of the North Bay, and assist in the compliance with state and federal water quality regulations.

### **MANURE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES**

**Facilities need to safely convey clean rain water away from manured areas and ponds without creating erosion.**

The achievement of satisfactory waste management is dependent upon design and construction of appropriately-sized facilities. All roofs, buildings, and non-manured areas located on the farm should be guttered or otherwise designed so that clean rainwater is diverted away from sources of animal manure and waste containment facilities. Clean, uncontaminated water may go directly into natural drainages, including that from pre-coolers and vacuum pumps.

Wash waters containing soaps and chemicals, or milk, must be contained on-site, without discharge to streams, creeks, or other drainages; or transported to an authorized waste treatment facility.

**Control all wastes and storm water run-off from confined animal-manured areas.**

Animal congregation and confinement areas include corrals, feeding and watering areas, high-use alley ways, and bridges where manure is concentrated. All wastes must be collected from these areas and directed to an appropriately sized pond or other containment facility, without overflow to streams, creeks, or other drainages. Manure ponds and containment facilities should be designed and operated to accommodate the waste water flow and rainfall that is likely to accumulate in the wettest winter (November-April) that may occur in a ten-year period.

All confined animals should be fenced or excluded from creeks or perennial streams. Creek crossings should be bridged in a manner that prevents animal waste from entering the waterway.

### **OPERATIONAL PRACTICE STANDARDS**

**All liquid and solid manure should be managed in a manner that prevents the migration of manure and manure constituents into local waterways.**

Ponds should be cleaned at least annually or on a schedule that maintains, under normal circumstances, at least

two feet of freeboard as a safeguard for unforeseen events. Pond capacity shall be upgraded periodically, in response to changes in the herd size.

Wastes, liquids, or manure solids should be applied to land located a safe distance from waterways and flood-prone or heavy-runoff areas, unless applied to and incorporated into the soil prior to the middle of October or blended with irrigation waters being applied to permanent pasture, prior to wet weather.

**Corrals or densely used portions of pastures need manure management too.**

All uncovered feeding or loafing areas, not draining into waste containment facilities shall be cleaned by the middle of October. Cleaning includes the removal of all manure, down to the soil level, to the extent that runoff from these areas will not degrade the water quality in adjacent waterways.

Animals shall be prevented from entering any surface water located within areas of animal confinement (i.e., corrals and loafing areas), and accumulation of manure in watercourses outside such areas should be prevented. Standing water shall not be allowed to accumulate in confinement areas during the wet season, in order to reduce the percolation of nutrients into the groundwater. Runoff from such areas must be diverted to the waste collection system.

**Manage pastures and fields for safe, effective manure utilization.**

Pastures used for grazing and manure disposal should be managed to prevent excessive damage to or removal of vegetation, and to prevent erosion. Overgrazing reduces the ability of the land to retain top soils and nutrients, and thus increases the runoff and erosion potential to the detriment of the stream, fish, and wildlife.

## **ENCOURAGED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

**Locate the animal feeding sites to protect waterways within high-use animal areas.**

As the soil, grasses, and other vegetation of a pasture can significantly reduce pollutant loads, all feeding and water troughs for animals should be located well away from streams and drainages and located on high ground, whenever possible. Drinking water sources should be developed instead of allowing livestock to use the streams.

**Develop a short-term and long-term waste management plan.**

All farms should have a prepared waste management plan, including:

- design, location, operation, and capacity information for all waste containment, treatment, reclamation, and disposal facilities.
- operations and maintenance schedules for all equipment and facilities which are essential for waste containment and disposal. Waste management information and responsibilities should be communicated to employees.

**Develop an emergency plan.**

Farms should have a waste emergency plan including:

- names and numbers for emergency waste haulers, pump rental companies, and alternative waste disposal options, such as nearby waste ponds with adequate capacity or municipal waste treatment

facilities.

- names and telephone numbers of appropriate agencies to be notified in the event of a release. Regional Water Quality requires that water quality agencies should be notified of discharge.

North Coast - (707) 576-2220  
Bay Area - (510) 286-1255  
Department of Fish and Game - (707) 944-5512

- alternative waste management plans in the event of power outages, earthquake, flood, fire, etc.

**Manure and water testing will provide for better decision making.**

For your information and use, regular testing of water, wells and up- and down-stream flow is encouraged for:

- Ammonia
- Temperature
- pH
- Total dissolved solids

Keep a written log of the information for your own use in evaluating the effectiveness of your manure management program.

**Apply manure fertilizer appropriately.**

Animal waste should be appropriately tested and applied to the soils in a manner consistent with plant and soil nutrient requirements. Soils to be fertilized need to be tested before manure or fertilizer are applied. This is particularly important for soils that have had manure applications for a number of years, and will be necessary in the anticipation of future non-point source regulations.

For additional information call:

North Coast Water Quality Control Board - (707) 576-2220  
Bay Area Water Quality Control Board - (510) 286-1255  
Soil Conservation Service - (707) 794-1242  
Department of Fish and Game - (707) 944-5500  
University of California Cooperative Extension - (707) 527-2621  
Sonoma/Marin Animal Waste Committee  
Sonoma County Farm Bureau - (707) 544-5575  
Marin County Farm Bureau - (415) 663-1231

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(1) The Sonoma Marin Animal Waste Committee is an informal group of agriculturalists, federal and state agency staff, consultants, and Farm Bureau members and staff. The group meets on a regular basis to discuss waste management issues and solutions. Coordination and technical support is provided by the University of California Cooperative Extension.

*These guidelines are prepared and published by the Sonoma-Marin Animal Waste Committee, in cooperation with the University of California Cooperative Extension, Sonoma and Marin Counties. These guidelines are intended to assist interested parties in effective animal waste management. Specific questions or technical or regulatory matters should be referred to the appropriate agency...November 1992.*

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