



WPCA CODES OF CARE



2013

The World Professional Chuckwagon Association was formed in 1981. Since it's inception the WPCA and it's drivers have been committed to the welfare of the animals in their care.

In 2010, as part of this commitment, the Board of Directors for the WPCA brought forward a motion to develop a *Codes of Care*. The intention of the *Codes* was to clearly outline the expected animal care standards for chuckwagon horses during transport and competition at WPCA sanctioned events. These *Codes* are intended to compliment the existing WPCA Rulebook and each driver is expected to comply with the recommendations within.

As part of this animal welfare mandate, an animal welfare committee was also formed. This committee consists of board members, drivers, animal welfare specialists and equine industry representatives. This committee is charged with ensuring that the standards within the *Codes* are kept current and that animal welfare issues are quickly addressed if necessary.

The WPCA and it's drivers are fully committed to animal welfare and will continue to do all they can to ensure that the horses in their care are well cared for. These *Codes* will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary.

**WPCA Codes of Care were developed in consultation with the
WPCA Animal Care Advisory Committee**

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World Professional Chuckwagon Association

Codes of Care

***Codes of Care* will be general standards that all involved with the care of horses at all WPCA events will be expected to abide by. They will be based on science, regulations and existing best practices and recommendations. This document reviewed annually and amended as necessary.**

Part 1 Introduction

The World Professional Chuckwagon Association (WPCA) takes the well-being of the animals in their care very seriously. As part of our evolving commitment to animal care and welfare, we have developed standards of care that our drivers, their staff and families, the WPCA Board of Directors, WPCA staff and the venues are expected to endorse and abide by.

The intention of the *Codes of Care* is to establish the expected standards of care provided to all horses involved in chuckwagon racing during transportation, care at WPCA sanctioned venues and during competition. It is the responsibility of all those working with animals within the WPCA to be knowledgeable of the proper care and management of the animals.

Part 2 Regulatory

The care and transport of animals within Canada is currently regulated by the the federal *Health of Animals Act XII, Criminal Code of Canada and provincial animal protection acts*. The WPCA *Codes of Care* reflects the existing regulations (federal and provincial) and the *Recommended Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals for Horses*, the *Recommended Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals for Transportation and WPCA By-Laws, Chuckwagon Race Rules and Policies*. The WPCA will continue to monitor any updates or changes to the regulations or recommendations and adjust the Codes of Care accordingly and provide the information to their members. Any changes that may occur to federal or provincial laws between the annual reviews of the code will supersede what is written in the Code.



Part 3

Authority of WPCA

The WPCA has the authority to enforce these codes through disciplinary actions established by the disciplinary committee. Actions may include, but are not limited to written warnings, fines, suspensions and/or disqualifications per the WPCA by-laws. All drivers will be required to abide by the *WPCA Codes of Care* including signing the *Codes of Care* agreement the at the beginning of each race season. Failure to do so will result in the member no longer being considered in “Good Standing” with the WPCA.

Throughout this document animal care is categorized as either a requirement or a recommendation. Requirements are mandatory for all drivers and must be adhered to. Failure to meet the animal care requirements will result in disciplinary action by the WPCA.

Recommendations are animal care practices that the WPCA has deemed to be a best practice but failure to adhere to them will not result in disciplinary action. The WPCA strongly encourages all drivers to adopt the recommend best practices as part of their animal care program.

The WPCA Board of Directors are responsible for enforcement of compliance with the WPCA Codes of Care. Failure to abide within the WPCA Codes of Care, will result in disciplinary actions.

Part 4

General Considerations

All individuals charged with the care and handling of chuckwagon horses, the WPCA Board of Directors, WPCA staff and the venues will be aware of the requirements of the WPCA Codes of Care.

WPCA will promote responsible animal care before, during and after all WPCA sanctioned events.

Each driver is responsible for the animals in their care at WPCA sanctioned events, regardless of their level of participation in the races.

WPCA sanctioned venues are responsible for providing the competitors with a competition environment conducive to the requirements of the WPCA Codes of Care.

The WPCA Animal Care Advisory Committee will consist of representatives from the drivers, the Board of Directors and WPCA staff. Outside committee members shall be recruited from science and research, animal welfare experts and equine industry representatives. The responsibilities of the committee may include the continued review of the *WPCA Codes of Care*, review of current wagon racing practices, consultation to the WPCA Board of Directors and membership on animal welfare issues or concerns.



Section 1 - Transportation

The intention of the *Codes of Care - Transportation* is to establish the expected standards of care provided to all horses involved in chuckwagon racing during transportation. It is the responsibility of all those working with animals within the WPCA to be knowledgeable of the proper care and management of the animals. The owner of the horses, no matter whether they are the transporter or not, are ultimately responsible for their animals and their care during transportation.

Transportation Requirements

It is the responsibility of all transporters to be knowledgeable of federal and provincial regulations, the current industry Recommended Codes of Practice and the WPCA Codes of Care pertaining to the transport of animals. *All aspects of the Health of Animals Act Part XII must be adhered to and can be found in Addendum A.*

Responsibilities and Competency

All transporters are responsible for the well-being of the animals during the transportation process. This includes pre-transportation care, loading, transport, unloading of the animal and post transport care.

The owners and/or the custodial wagon driver of the horses are responsible to ensure that any person hauling their animals will not only be considered competent transporters, but also must insure they are aware of their responsibilities, humane handling and all applicable regulations and codes of care.

Fitness to Transport

All horses must be free of injuries or conditions that would cause further pain and suffering during transport. The transportation of compromised animals must only occur after consultation with a veterinarian. (Refer to the Alberta *Humane Handling Guidelines for Horses: Standards for the Care of Unfit Animals*)

Any animals that are injured or became ill during transport must be attended to immediately.

Post Transportation

When a trip exceeds 8 hours, horses must be allowed a minimum of 5 hours rest before competing.

Transportation Recommendations

Pre-Transport

All horses should be allowed access to water before transport.

All horses should be up to date on vaccinations and in good general health (normal body temperature, no nasal discharge, eating and drinking normally).

All horses should be appropriately trained in trailer loading.



Trailers/Transport Vehicles

Trailers should be kept clean and free of debris in order to maintain a healthy respiratory environment and to decrease the chances of slipping or falling.

All vehicles should be fitted with interior lighting.

Unloading/loading ramps should be as wide as the unloading/loading door or be fitted with side rails to ensure horses can safely load and unload without stepping off the side of the ramp. If ramps are used they should not exceed 20° and have consist of a non-slip surface. (Ramps cannot exceed 45° per the Health of Animals Act Part XII.)

Loading

Drivers should check all loads before departure and again early in the trip. Things to check for include an animal down, overheating, cold stress or sick animal.

In-transit

Drivers should drive at all times with caution . Start, stop and drive the trucks smoothly to prevent horses from being thrown off balance.

Trailers should keep moving, outside of regular transport breaks to allow for passive ventilation throughout the trailer. Trailers that remain stationary for an extended period of time can result in heat stress in the horses, especially in warm/hot temperatures. If trailers are fitted with fans, the fans should be turned on whenever the trailer is stationary.

Environmental management tools, such as thermometers, are recommended in transport vehicles to monitor the environment within the trailer.

In hot weather it is best to strictly limit the time that the trailer is stationary with animals loaded. Animals can overheat quite quickly. If the trailer must be stopped, it should be parked in the shade and an area where a cross breeze is present. Animals should be unloaded as soon as possible.

Post Transport

Each horse should be inspected for injury or illness following transport.

The health of all horses should be monitored for the first 24 hours following transport.



Section 2 - General Care of Animals

The intention of the *Codes of Care - General Care of Animals* is to establish the expected standards of care provided to all horses participating in WPCA sanctioned events. It is the responsibility of all those working with animals within the WPCA to be knowledgeable of the proper care and management of the animals.

Acts of abuse or neglect towards any animal participating in or attending a WPCA event will not be tolerated by the WPCA. Any person found mistreating horses will face suspension or disqualification per the WPCA rule book. Examples of acts of abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to: the use of electric prods on horses, striking a horse in the face, beating a horse and not meeting the horses nutritional or water needs.

Animal Care Requirements

Training and Competency

It is the responsibility of all handlers and caregivers to have due regard for the welfare of the animals at all times. All wagon drivers are responsible for the training of handlers and caregivers in the proper care and humane handling of the horses.

Nutritional Needs

Horses must be provided a diet that is formulated to meet the needs of their performance expectations.

Every horse must have access to a sufficient supply of potable water to meet its individual maintenance and activity needs. Horses must be provided access to water in their stalls during rest periods. Water may be pulled before competition.

Housing and Containment

All stalling must be structurally safe for the horses with no exposed areas where they may injure themselves. (ie. sharp edges, protruding bolts, etc.). There must not be areas within the stalling locations where animals can get their limbs or head stuck.

Each horse must have enough space to lie down in a normal resting posture, stand with the head fully raised, walk forward, and turn around in comfort. For tie stalls, each horse must have enough space to lie down in a normal resting posture, stand with the head fully raised, and walk forward in comfort. Ties stalls must provide a minimum of 4' per horses.

Flooring within stalling areas must provide good traction, with proper drainage to prevent injury and discomfort.

All temporary fencing and paneling must be sufficient to contain horses and must be in good repair to prevent injury to the horses.

The use of smudges is prohibited without the authorization of the show director. If smudges are placed within outdoor pens, the horses must be able to move away from the smoke and a barrier must surround the smudge in such a way that horses are unable to come in contact with the smudge. Smudges are not prohibited within barns or areas of housing for the animal and must never be left unattended.

Halters must be readily accessible for all horses in case of an emergency.

Equipment

Handling and restraining devices must be used in a humane manner at all times. They must be appropriate to the animals disposition and physical capabilities.

All tack, harnesses and racing equipment must properly fit each horse to prevent injury or irritation. It must be maintained in good operating condition.

The use of electric prods during is strictly prohibited during WPCA events.

Health and Wellbeing

Handlers and caregivers must be able to identify early signs of distress or disease.

The health of the horses should be monitored continually for illness or injury. When necessary, treatment must be prompt and appropriate to the health issue.

If a sick or injured animal, that is considered compromised, requires transport to a veterinarian clinic, this must occur under the direction of a veterinarian. Direction of a veterinarian can include direct contact with the veterinarian or phone contact with the clinic regarding the condition of the horse and estimated time of arrival.

Horses that require euthanasia must have it applied promptly, with minimal stress and further suffering. A horse requiring euthanasia should only be moved for safety reasons.

Animal Care Recommendations

Nutritional Needs

If feeding in groups, horses must be allowed enough room to prevent fighting.

Feeding and watering equipment should be kept clean at all times.

Feed must be stored where horses cannot gain access to it.

Housing and Containment

All stalling facilities should allow for natural ventilation or be provided with automated ventilation to allow for the circulation of air.

Air quality should be maintained to the best of the caregivers ability. This includes the movement of air to lessen the accumulation of dust, noxious gases, humidity and heat. Air movement though must not cause discomfort to the animals.

Stalling should provide protection from adverse weather when necessary.

Stalling should allow for easy access for both the horse and the handlers.

All feeding, handling and cleaning equipment should be stored in a safe place at all times.

Stalls and temporary paddocks should be kept clean and free of debris at all times, with appropriate bedding.

Fire extinguishers and emergency plans should be in place at all times. Evacuation routes and emergency phone numbers should be posted in all barns or stalling areas. All drivers should be made aware of the implementation of emergency plans for each venue.

Lighting should allow for visual inspection of the horse and the stall at all times.

Handling

Horse should be handled quietly, with care and patience at all times to avoid injury, pain and distress.

Equipment

All halters, leads and other material used to restrain or handle horses must be equipped with a quick release in case a horse becomes tangled in the equipment.

Section 3 - Competition

The intention of the *Codes of Care - Competition* is to establish the expected standards of care provided to all horses involved in chuckwagon racing during competition in WPCA sanctioned events. It is the responsibility of all those working with animals within the WPCA to be knowledgeable of the proper care and management of the animals. The WPCA *Codes of Care - Competition* compliments the existing regulations (federal and provincial) and the *Recommended Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals for Horses and the WPCA By-Laws, Chuckwagon Race Rules and Policies*.

Competition Requirements

Fitness and Health

All horses are subject to inspection by a veterinarian at anytime. All horses must be deemed fit to compete in any WPCA sanctioned event. Any animal that is deemed unfit to compete will not be permitted to participate in the race. Fitness to compete includes a horse that is sound on all four legs, free of injury and is in overall general good health.

Animals cannot be administered drugs that are not permitted per the WPCA Animal Drug Testing Policy and Procedure.

All horses are subject to random drug testing per the WPCA Animal Drug Testing Policy and Procedure.

All animals must be shod on all four feet in order to compete.

Any horse that is injured during a race must be removed from the heat as soon as discovered by the competitor. A driver or outrider cannot continue to run an animal that is knowingly injured.

Emergency response personnel must be trained in emergency response procedures and the WPCA Codes of Care.

Animal care trailers must be present and readily accessible at all races. In the event of an accident or an injured/downed horse, the welfare of the horse will be of the highest consideration, second only to human safety.

All injured animals will be handled in a humane and respectable manner, with great effort made to limit any further pain, suffering and/or distress.

The safety of other horses must be considered at all times.

Any compromised animals will be under the immediate care of a veterinarian.

If a horse is to be transported or moved for treatment, it must be done as humanely as possible and moved the shortest distance possible.

Horses that require euthanasia must have it applied promptly, with minimal stress and further suffering. A horse requiring euthanasia should only be moved for the procedure in cases of human safety.



Handling During Competition

Horses must not be struck or forced to run in any way that may cause injury.

Chuckwagon and outriding horses shall not be used in more than one heat per day at WPCA sanctioned events.

Horses cannot run more than 3 days in a row, with one day off or 4 days in a row, followed by 2 days off at any given meet.

Drivers and outriders must not interfere in any way with another wagon or horses that will cause injury to horses. Penalties and fines will be assessed based on the WPCA rule books.

Equipment

All wagons and racing equipment must meet the specs as outlined in the WPCA Rule Book.

Equipment such as spurs or crops cannot be designed or used in any way that can injure the horses. The use of whips or the ends of lines on wagon horses will not be permitted.



Section 4 - Race Venues

The intention of the *Codes of Care - Race Venues* is to establish the expected standards of care provided to all horses involved in chuckwagon racing during competition in WPCA sanctioned events. It is the responsibility of each venue to be aware of the animal care expectations of the WPCA when hosting an sanctioned race or event. The WPCA *Codes of Care - Race Venues* compliments the existing regulations (federal and provincial) and the *Recommended Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals for Horses and the WPCA By-Laws, Chuckwagon Race Rules and Policies*.

Race Venue Requirements

Housing and Containment

Each venue must supply a sufficient amount of potable water to meet the needs of all animals participating in the race. Each WPCA sanctioned venue is responsible for ensuring that all competitors have access to a sufficient supply of potable water.

Any stalling provided by a venue must be structurally safe for the horses with no exposed areas where they may injure themselves. (ie. sharp edges, protruding bolts, etc.) There must not be areas within the stalling locations where animals can get their limbs or head stuck.

Each horse must have enough space to lie down in a normal resting posture, stand with the head fully raised, walk forward, and turn around in comfort. Tie stalls must be 4' wide and each horse must have enough space to lie down in a normal resting posture, stand with the head fully raised, and walk forward in comfort.

Electrical panels and wiring should not be accessible to horses at any time.

Stalls and temporary paddocks should be kept clean and free of debris at all times

Flooring within stalling areas must provide good traction, with proper drainage to prevent injury and discomfort.

All temporary and or permanent fencing and paneling must be sufficient to contain horses and must be in good repair to prevent injury to the horses.

Track and Infield

The track and barrels shall meet the standards as outlined in the WPCA rule book.

The perimeter fencing must not have any protrusions, sharp edges, gaps or gateways that will cause injury to animals. Arena fences must be clearly visible and not appear open to the animals.

The track must be free of debris, obstacles, rocks, holes or any other hazards that may injure animals.

The track must have adequate drainage and be maintained as conditions dictate.

Track conditions will be assessed by the WPCA track committee. Heats or races will be cancelled if the track is evaluated to be unsafe.



Health Care

A veterinarian must be available at all times at each WPCA venue.

A minimum of two veterinarians must be present during all heats.

Each venue is required to supply a rescue trailer that meets the specifications of the WPCA. The trailer must be accessible during all heats.



Appendix A

Health of Animals Act Part XII

In Canada, the transportation of livestock is regulated by the **Health of Animals Act Part XII**. It defines the conditions that must be met in order for the transport of animals to be considered humane. Examples of the provisions contained in Part XII include: the prohibition of overcrowding of animals during transport, prohibition of transportation of animals that are unfit to travel, carriers cannot load, transport or unload animals in a way that would cause injury or undue suffering, requirements for provision of food, water, and rest at specific intervals, protection from adverse weather and adequate ventilation, use of proper containers and transport vehicles, and segregation of incompatible animals.

Per the **Health of Animals Act Part XII**

All transport vehicles must have:

Proper flooring (stable and non-slip)

Proper ventilation allowing for appropriate airflow.

Adequate space for the species being transported is required for all modes of transport including enough clearance to insure horses do not come in contact with the roof or deck while standing in a natural position.

Allow for easy loading and unloading of animals. The height of the back gate of the trailer should be appropriate to the species being loaded.

All gates must swing freely and secure firmly shut.

Have no sharp or protruding objects that can injure the animal.

Protection from severe weather conditions.

Be cleaned and sanitized regularly.

All facilities and ramps used to load and unload animals must:

Be free of sharp or protruding objects that can injure an animal.

Have non slip flooring.

Have no areas where animals can get their head or legs trapped.

When loading or unloading animals

All animals must be fit for the journey. No injured or ill animals should be tendered for transport unless being transported for medical care under the direct care of a veterinarian.

Animals must be loaded in a way the will not cause undue stress or injury.

Incompatible animals cannot be transported in the same compartment. They must be segregated. This includes animals of significant different sizes, different species and ones that are incompatible by nature. Examples of this include miniature ponies with full size horses, mares and foals, other than one mare with her foal in a compartment alone.

Animals must have appropriate space based on the species and length of the journey.

All gates must be secure.

The full version of this act can be found at:

http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._296/page-37.html#h-70 or from the WPCA office upon request.

Appendix B

Recommendations for Risk Management During Transportation

Although the goal of all transporters is to reach their final destination safely and in a timely manner, risk factors do exist with each load transported. Risk factors include, but are not limited to: breakdowns, flat tires, road construction, injured or ill horses and motor vehicle accidents.

- All drivers should have emergency plans in place and all employees aware of the plans for any known risk factor.
- All drivers should avoid road construction whenever possible. Pre-planning a trip can assist in the most effective routing.
- Roadside emergency kits should be kept in all vehicles. They should include emergency first aid items for the horses.
- In the event of a breakdown, always pull as far off the road as possible. If you are able to keep driving to a safe pull-out, do so.
- Whenever possible, avoid unloading horses along a highway.
- Horse should not be left on stationary trailers on a warm day. Transfer trailers should be organized ASAP.

Appendix C

Requirements for Rescue and Recovery Trailer

- Each venue is required to supply a rescue trailer that meets the specifications of the WPCA. The trailer must be accessible during all heats.
- Trailer must be large enough to remove horses from the track and be enclosed enough to block them from public view.
- Trailer must be parked in an area to allow immediate access to the track or infield.
- Only trained operators should participate in the operation of equipment related to the trailer.
- Person operating the rescue trailer must be familiar with operation of all equipment.
- Tarps should be used at all times to screen the incident from the audience. Tarps should be put up immediately.
- Only experienced personnel should handle horses during recovery.
- A horse must be confirmed dead before being winched into a recovery trailer.
- All deceased animals will be transported to pre-designated area following recovery. Horses cannot be disposed until WPCA clears them following blood tests or examination if required. Holding areas and means of disposal must be discrete.
- No pictures or recordings are allowed by rescue personnel or bystanders.
- Each trailer must be stocked with:
 - Tarps - large enough to form a barrier around the scene of the incident.
 - Winch - powerful enough to load a deceased horse.
 - Extra Halters
 - Leather gloves
 - Knives for cutting equipment