



Redwings' quarantine and testing protocol for new and returning horses

All horses that are brought into Redwings from outside the Sanctuary, including those returning from a private home as part of our Guardianship rehoming scheme, may be carrying an infectious disease. The level of risk will vary, but all horses will be kept within a suitable quarantine area while they are monitored and tested for strangles.

The isolation area used should meet the following criteria:

- Be fully segregated from horses who are not in quarantine
- Have an exclusion zone of at least 10m where the horse's living area is not protected by a solid, full-height partition such as a wall
- Enable the necessary care of the horse to be provided
- Ensure the welfare of the horse is not compromised
- Have storage capacity for dedicated quarantine equipment

Equipment required:

- Signs and barriers to clearly show quarantine boundary and entry/exit point
- Bin with lid for storage of clean overalls at quarantine entry point
- Overalls (overcoats are not sufficient)
- Disposable gloves
- Safe4 concentrated disinfectant, Handsan and Safe4 spray
- Watertight bin or tub that is large enough to disinfect worn overalls
- Tub or trough for disinfectant foot-dip
- Plastic bags for rubbish such as worn gloves, used cotton wool etc
- Dedicated stable tools, feeding buckets, haynets, headcollars, leadropes, rugs and any other equipment needed to care for the horse(s) in quarantine
- Facilities for muck storage if safe disposal outside the quarantine area is not possible

Disinfectant dilution rates:

- The Safe4 dilution rate for all quarantine areas is 1:100, meaning 100ml of Safe4 concentrate should be added to every 10 litres of water

Procedures:

- Minimise the number of staff entering quarantine as much as possible. Staff who are not used to using quarantine procedures should work alongside experienced colleagues at first
- Minimise movement of items in and out of quarantine – use dedicated quarantine equipment that can remain within the area

- Put on clean overalls before entering quarantine – DO NOT reuse overalls that have not been disinfected. Ensure overalls cover all clothing, particularly cuffs and the bottom of trousers. Make sure overalls are not torn or otherwise defective. Wear disposable latex gloves if required
- Long hair should be tied up or tucked under a hat. Avoid touching your face or hair with your hands while you are in quarantine. Minimise contact with horses in quarantine, especially round the head and when discharge is present
- Any obvious nasal or abscess discharge in or around the stable should be carefully removed and disposed of to reduce contamination
- Dispose of muck by the agreed method – either using a separate muck heap or storing in heavy duty plastic bags
- Before discarding drinking water, Safe4 disinfectant must be added as this is a potential source of heavy contamination. In the case of water tanks, drain the water into a bucket, add Safe4 and then discard
- Feed buckets should be washed with disinfectant between each use
- When leaving quarantine, peel off overalls to ensure the outside does not come into contact with clothing underneath. Overall should then remain inside out until disinfected and cleaned ready to be worn again
- Put used overalls in the 'used overalls' bin of disinfectant. Ensure they are fully submerged and soaked through before hanging up in a suitable place to dry
- Any equipment or personal belongings that need to be brought out of quarantine should be thoroughly disinfected at the point of exit
- Remove and dispose of single-use gloves if worn and disinfect hands with Handsan
- Dip boots when leaving quarantine so that all exposed parts of the boot (not just the sole) are in contact with the disinfectant
- Disinfectant dips are to be changed every two days, or more frequently if they become heavily soiled or if heavy rain could have affected dilution

Veterinary testing and length of quarantine:

- The quarantine period will be a minimum of three weeks but may be extended if an equine tests positive or begins to show clinical signs consistent with infectious disease. The three weeks allow for the incubation of infectious disease in horses who may have had contact just before their admission
- All new horses and those that are returning from Guardian homes will be tested for strangles by a veterinary surgeon
- The vet will also decide whether the horse requires worming, delousing, vaccinating while in quarantine
- Horses that have only been away from the Sanctuary for one to two days (such as ponies attending educational events) will be monitored for signs of disease but do not need to be tested
- All horses in quarantine will have all their welfare needs fully considered and met as far as quarantine measures allow. Enrichment measures will be used to support the individual's physical and mental wellbeing.

Cleaning after quarantine

The vet overseeing the quarantine testing will inform the Equine Centre Manager when quarantine can be lifted

If a horse is not found to be affected by an infectious condition:

- Muck can be disposed of on the general site muck heap

If a horse has tested positive for an infectious condition while they are in quarantine:

- Muck will be a source of contamination and must be disposed of appropriately
- All forage, open feed bags or shavings bales used or stored in the quarantine area must be disposed of as a source of contamination
- Unopened feed, forage or bedding that has plastic packaging can be thoroughly disinfected and returned for general use
- All equipment and horse wear used or stored in the quarantine area must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before being returned to general use
- Water tanks must be emptied, cleaned and disinfected, Safe4 being added to drained water before it is discarded
- The whole quarantine area and stable must be completely cleaned and disinfected, including lifting rubber matting to clean and disinfect on both sides as well as the floor underneath
- Anything else that has been in the quarantine area or needs to be removed from the area must be disinfected, including hose pipes, items used as barriers, quarantine signs, bins etc

Quarantine procedures for vehicles:

When a Redwings horsebox or trailer is used to transport any horse who could be a source of infection, the vehicle and any used equipment must be thoroughly disinfected before it used by another equine.

It is the responsibility of the driver and their assistant to ensure that the vehicle and any equipment they have used are disinfected and left in a satisfactory and safe condition.

The following areas must be disinfected after use:

Container:

- floor
- walls and windows
- ceiling
- partitions
- ramp

Living/storage areas:

- floors, seats, any facilities and equipment used
- all equine equipment used during loading, travel and unloading (headcollars, leadropes, buckets and containers, grooming kit, haynets, rugs etc) and areas used to store them in transit

Cab/towing vehicle:

- steering wheel, gear stick, door handles etc
- foot well, foot pedals, steps etc
- seats (can use disinfectant spray)
- keys, any other equipment handled while travelling