



For Immediate Release
March 6, 2024

Neurologic Form of Equine Herpes Virus Confirmed on Travis County Premises

AUSTIN, TX – The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) received confirmation of equine herpes myeloencephalopathy (EHM), the neurologic disease linked to equine herpes virus (EHV-1), on a Travis County premises on March 4, 2024. These cases are the first positive detections of EHM in Texas this year.

Three horses were tested after showing neurologic signs, including swollen limbs, lethargy, and fever. The premises of origin has been quarantined and TAHC staff are working closely with the owner and local veterinarian to monitor other horses and enforce biosecurity measures on the premises.

The EHM positive horses participated in a small local show hosted on the premises, February 24, 2024. Additional participants of this event have been notified by the TAHC.

Owners of horses that may have been in contact with these horses or exposed to EHM should work with their veterinary practitioner to establish appropriate monitoring and diagnostic plans to take precautions.

- Clean and disinfect tack, boots, equipment, and grooming supplies.
- When you return to your premises, isolate the horses that attended the event for at least two weeks.
- Have the temperature of returning horses monitored twice daily for at least 14 days after last known exposure. If a fever ($\geq 101.5^{\circ}\text{F}$) or other signs consistent with EHM develop, contact your veterinarian.
- When doing feeding and chores, work with the returning horses last, wear boots and coveralls, and remove them before working with your other horses.
- Don't forget to wash your hands.
- Submit laboratory samples for clinical horses to Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) or other American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) accredited laboratory.

Clinical signs of EHM in horses may include: fever of 102°F or greater (fever most often comes before neurologic signs), nasal discharge, lack of coordination, hindquarter weakness, leaning or resting against a fence or wall to maintain balance, lethargy, urine dribbling, head tilt, diminished tail tone, and penile paralysis.

It is important to remember these signs are not specific to EHM and diagnostic testing is required to confirm infection. If you suspect your horse has been exposed to EHV-1, contact your local veterinarian.

- [Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy Fact Sheet](#)
- [Equine Biosecurity Guide](#)

The equine industry is encouraged to obtain the latest information on equine disease events nationwide on the [Equine Disease Communication Center \(EDCC\) website](#). Subsequent Texas EHM cases will be posted on the EDCC.

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The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) was established in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission and charged with protecting the state's domestic animals "from all contagious or infectious diseases of a malignant character." TAHC remains true to this charge while evolving with the times to protect the health and marketability of all Texas livestock and poultry. Learn more about the TAHC by visiting www.tahc.texas.gov.