



# Guidelines for the Disinfection of Horse Transport Vehicles

Modified by PIRSA Animal Health (8 October 2007) from a NSW Dept Ag Factsheet

**Equine Influenza Hotline Number: 1800 675 888**

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## Why disinfect vehicles?

Equine influenza (EI) is a **highly contagious** viral disease of horses, donkeys and mules that can be easily spread by contaminated **horse transport vehicles**, equipment and people. It is recognised that EI can survive on hard, non-porous surfaces found in floats and truck (such as plastic and steel) for up to 48 hours. However, the EI virus can be killed by thorough cleaning and disinfection.

## Legal requirements

Under the *Livestock Act* 1997, the introduction of horse transport vehicles (including floats, trucks and trailers) from interstate, whether a horse is present or not, is prohibited unless accompanied by a permit issued by Animal Health, Department of Primary Industries and Resources SA (PIRSA). A permit will only be issued if the horse transport vehicle has been cleaned and disinfected. A copy of the permit must also accompany the horse transport vehicle whilst in transit.

Penalties for non-compliance may include:

- refusal of entry at state border road blocks if the horse transport vehicle is visibly soiled with aged organic matter and/or no accompanying permit is present;
- prosecution and a maximum fine of up to \$20,000.

A permit application for the introduction of interstate horse transport vehicles to South Australia can be completed and submitted on-line. The on-line application form can be accessed on [www.pir.sa.gov.au/horseflu](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/horseflu).

## Disinfection Procedure for Vehicles

1. Remove all organic material from the vehicle as this will reduce the effectiveness of the disinfection process (and may harbour the EI virus). This includes:
  - o sweeping out all straw and manure, and if floor mats are present, remove these and clean thoroughly on both sides.
  - o hosing out the inside and outside of the horse transport vehicle so that all walls, windows, ceiling and the floor are cleaned. If possible use a pressure hose.
  - o scrubbing with soapy water of any remaining organic contamination, especially caked on material - be sure to remove all traces of tissue, blood, saliva, mucus and horse hair.



- o disposing of the waste material and used cleaning fluids on site. Ensure that horses do not have access to this material as it may harbour EI. For example, EI can survive in:

Soil (under dark storage)                      24 hours @ 18°C

Soil (under sunlight)                            8 hours @ 15°C

Sunlight    15 minutes @ 15°C

2. Before leaving your property, remove all material from tyre treads (both car and horse transport vehicle) using a hose and disinfect the tyres where the vehicle has driven through yards/paddocks contaminated with horse waste products.
3. Disinfect the inside and outside of the vehicle using a multi-purpose disinfectant such as household bleach. A garden hand spray unit containing disinfectant is practical for this purpose. Make sure the disinfectant is of the correct concentration and follow occupational health and safety instructions – read the label! Virkon S® may also be used at 1:100 dilution (mix 100g Virkon S in 10 litres water).
4. Mildly contaminated surfaces within the vehicle interior can be wiped down with alcohol based cloths such as antiseptic wipes (e.g. Wet Ones™, IsoWipes™).
5. The person who decontaminated the vehicle must then undergo a personal disinfection protocol (see below) prior to travelling in the clean vehicle.

South Australian horse owners and transporters are encouraged to undertake these precautionary measures also as part of their continuing EI prevention strategy.

**For further information, see “Disinfection procedures for skin, clothes and equipment”, which is available on [www.pir.sa.gov.au/horseflu](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/horseflu).**

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