Introduction

In today's society, responding to incidents involving animals is both an expectation and an acknowledgement that such incidents will likely involve people putting themselves and others at risk of injury. Through proper training of best practices and the use of specialized rescue equipment the odds of a favourable outcome for both animals and responders is improved. This reference sheet has been developed as a quick reference tool for the various manipulation techniques used in Large Animal Rescue. The techniques reflected in the reference sheet should not be attempted without appropriate training.

Backwards Drag

Backwards Drag Youtube Link

- This technique can be used to assist an animal out of an entrapment.
- It can be used on an animal that is standing or is in sternal or lateral recumbency.
- There are two configuration methods: the basket and lark's foot (also choke or cinch) configuration.

Equipment

- Halter (use an emergency rope halter if a halter is not available)
- Webbing (15m x 12-15 cm webbing with sewn loop ends. Centre of the webbing is clearly marked.)
- Strop Guide or Lunge Whip (may not be required if the webbing can be "flossed" under the animal).
- Reach tool(s)

Operation

- Review "Action at Scene"
- An animal handler is appointed and places a halter on the animal and establishes head control
- Responders approach the animal on both sides keeping in mind the safety zones

Safety

- When using the flossing technique, be careful to avoid abrasion or friction burn injuries to the animal
- Ensure eye protection for a recumbent animal
- If a recumbent animal is being pulled for any distance it should be pulled onto a tarp or glide to prevent abrasions and cuts.
- If a glide is being used, guide ropes should be attached with additional rescuers prepared to "haul" at the same time rescuers are pulling/hauling the animal.

- **Basket configuration**:
    - ◊ *On a recumbent animal* use the flossing method to slide the webbing under the animal to the level of its hips.
    - ◊ The webbing is passed over the animal from its back towards its hooves
    - ◊ *On a standing animal* reach tools will be required to place the webbing on the animal's back at its hips and to thread the webbing between the animal's rear legs.
    - ◊ Ensure the webbing is centered on the animal's back
    - ◊ The webbing is now "threaded" evenly between the rear legs of the animal (a reach tool may be required to lift the upper leg of a recumbent animal to allow the webbing to pass between its rear legs)

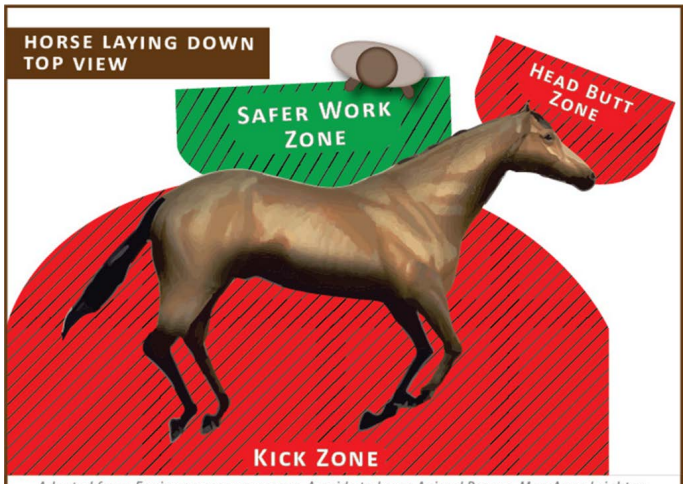
- **Lark's foot configuration:**
    - ◊ Instead of both ends of the webbing being passed evenly between the animal's rear legs (basket configuration), one end of the webbing is threaded through the loop of the other end and threaded between the rear legs.
    - ◊ This method places significant pressure on the animal's abdomen and has the potential to cause serious injury. If used it should be performed as quickly as possible.
    - ◊ This configuration is **not** a primary rescue method.

- The webbing is pulled taut in preparation for hauling.
- The animal handler calls the command "haul"
- When the animal is free of its entrapment drop the webbing
- The animal handler maintains control of the head but allows the animal to use its head and neck to right itself

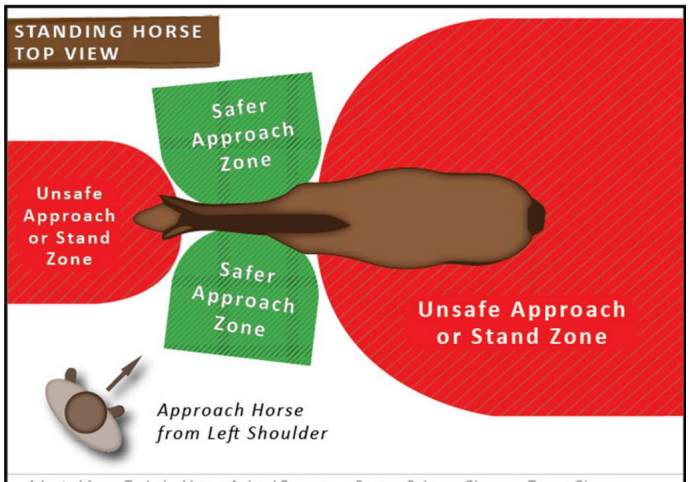
Reminders:

Action at Scene

- Establish scene safety
- Establish incident command and operate under the Incident Management System (IMS) framework
- Establish an Incident Action Plan
- Acquire rescue equipment and human resources (i.e. may need a veterinarian on scene or an individual with specific livestock expertise)
- Establish containment facilities



Adapted from: Equine emergency rescue, A guide to Large Animal Rescue, MaryAnne Leighton and Michelle Staples (pg 9)



Adapted from: Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue, Rebecca Gimenez, Tomas Gimenez and Kimberly A. May (pg 58, figure 4.10)

Animal Safety

- Heads, tails and limbs are not handles – DO NOT use them for pulling (serious injury and potentially life threatening injury can result)
- Always protect the animal's eyes
- Establish and maintain head control at all times.
- Allow a rescued animal the time they need to stand if they have been rescued from a downed position. DO NOT force the animal to stand and move.
- Some animals may need sedation prior to performing the rescue to reduce the risk of injury to the animal and responders

Resources

- Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue Inc. (Training) (tlaer.org)
- British Animal Rescue and Trauma Care Association (bartacic.org)
- College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida (Large Animal Rescue Training)

Local Resources:

Veterinarian: Equine: _____

_____

Livestock: _____

_____

Poultry: _____

_____

Mutual Aid Department(s):_____

_____

Livestock Hauler(s): _____

_____

Heavy Tow Operator(s):_____

_____

Heavy Machinery Operator(s): _____

_____

Fencing Supply Company: _____

_____

Livestock Specialist(s)(i.e., local producer):_____

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Equine Guelph thanks the large animal rescue training professionals for providing and reviewing content.