

SOP No: ATT 042

SUBJECT Safely release a horse

POLICY: These procedures may only be performed by operators who have been educated in the correct techniques, and under the supervision of their Demonstrator who is skilled in horse handling. Leather boots must be worn.

PRECAUTIONS: Be constantly aware of the horse's body language and responses. At all times work calmly and quietly around them. Make sure gates are closed securely. Ensure there are no hazards which could cause injury. Make sure you do not get into a position where you could get crushed between the horse and the rails, gate, etc. Do not get into a position where the horse can strike or kick you.

EQUIPMENT: Safe stock yards, halter and lead rope

PROCEDURE:

1. To safely release a horse, lead the horse into the yard, making sure the gate is secured behind you. Move the horse away from the gate and then turn the horse to face the gate. Place the lead rope around its neck and hold the rope while you remove the halter. Do not let it move away until the halter and lead rope are removed. Step away towards the gate quietly, keeping an eye on the horse.
2. If there are other horses in the yard, you may have to position the horse differently especially if it is anxious to rejoin the other horses. You must make sure you are not standing between your horse and the other horses so that you could get run over, you must be able to see the other horses at all times, and you must stand and move so that you are not near its hindlegs, putting you at risk of being kicked.
3. Dominant horses which are known to behave aggressively should be released last for the safety of humans and other horses.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

DATE ISSUED: 24.06.2009

REVISED:

REFERENCES

1. Rose, R.J. and Hodgson, D.R. Manual of Equine Practice. Second Edition. W.B. Saunders. Philadelphia. 2000.