

- SOP No:** ATT 051
- SUBJECT:** Euthanasia in Horses
- POLICY:** This procedure may only be performed by operators who have been educated in the correct techniques, and under the supervision of their skilled Demonstrator. Leather boots and clean overalls must be worn.
- PRECAUTIONS:** The horse will be suitably restrained by a skilled handler standing on the same side of the horse as the operator. A skin or nose twitch will be used if additional restraint is required.
- EQUIPMENT:**
- Halter & lead
 - Twitch
 - Animal Clippers
 - 19 – 21 Gauge Needles
 - 22 – 25 Gauge Needles
 - 14 Gauge 3.25 inch Intravenous Catheter (Angiocath)
 - Large bore extension set
 - Superglue
 - 2.5 ml syringes
 - 60 ml syringes
 - Alcohol Swabs
 - Xylazine 100 mg/ml
 - Lignocaine 2%
 - Pentobarbital solution (390 mg/ml)
- PROCEDURE:**
1. The horse is first sedated with Xylazine (see [SOP ATT 053](#)).
 2. An intravenous catheter is placed in the jugular vein (see [SOP ATT 049](#)) and a large bore extension set is attached to the catheter.
 3. 100 mg/kg of Pentobarbital solution is drawn up into 2 x 60 ml syringes. To improve the ease of injection, the viscosity of the pentobarbital may be reduced by making a 50% pentobarbital/50% water solution and/or heating the pentobarbital in hot water prior to injecting into the horse.
 3. The handler ensures he/she has good control over the head of the horse. The operator then rapidly injects the solution of pentobarbital through the extension set and catheter while carefully monitoring the position and demeanour of the horse at all times.
 4. The handler supports the horse's head when the horse collapses to the ground. If the horse collapses prior to the full dose being administered, the injection is completed once the horse is recumbent and the handler and operator are safely positioned away from the horse.
 5. The operator confirms death of the horse by ensuring there is no pulse or discernible heart beat. If death cannot be confirmed, additional pentobarbital may be injected until there is confirmed asystole.

- 6. The horse is then lifted using a fork lift or winch and moved to a suitable location for post mortem and/or disposal.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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REVISED:

REFERENCES:

- 1. Rose, R.J. and Hodgson, D.R. Manual of Equine Practice. pp 754-755. Second Edition. W.B. Saunders. Philadelphia. 2000.**