



# SAFE AND SANE LARGE ANIMAL HANDLING



**There can be many reasons that large animals need to be handled, moved or loaded for transport.**

**Many of these activities can take place in high risk environments.**



Horses in urban areas





**Horses on highways**



**Floods**



**Wildfires**

# Transportation Accidents



NEW AT 11:00

> **CRASH SURVIVORS SHARE STORY**

> SAY THEY ARE 'LUCKY TO BE ALIVE'

WPEC-12



Some horses may not have been handled.



**Making a halter using a rope and pole**



Or they want to avoid people.



**Using a Rescue Clip when a horse won't allow someone in its space**





Some may  
have to be  
herded.





No matter what the situation, calm energy and cooperative teamwork is what is most often successful



**Corralling a horse with wire around its leg**

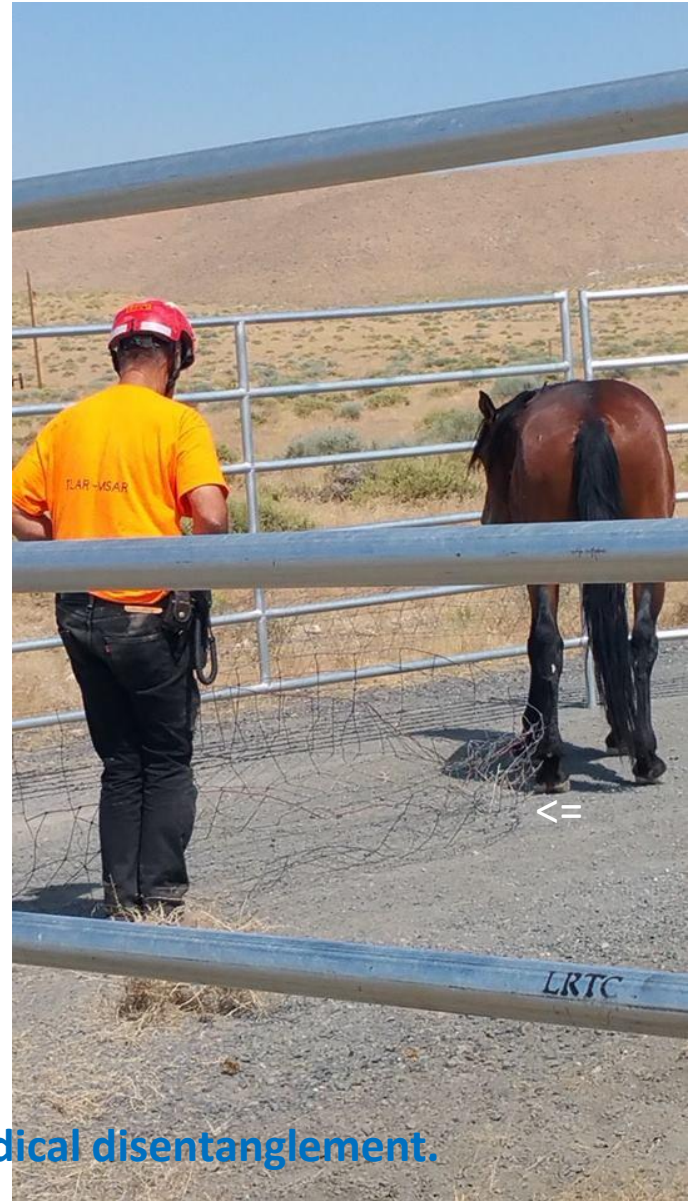
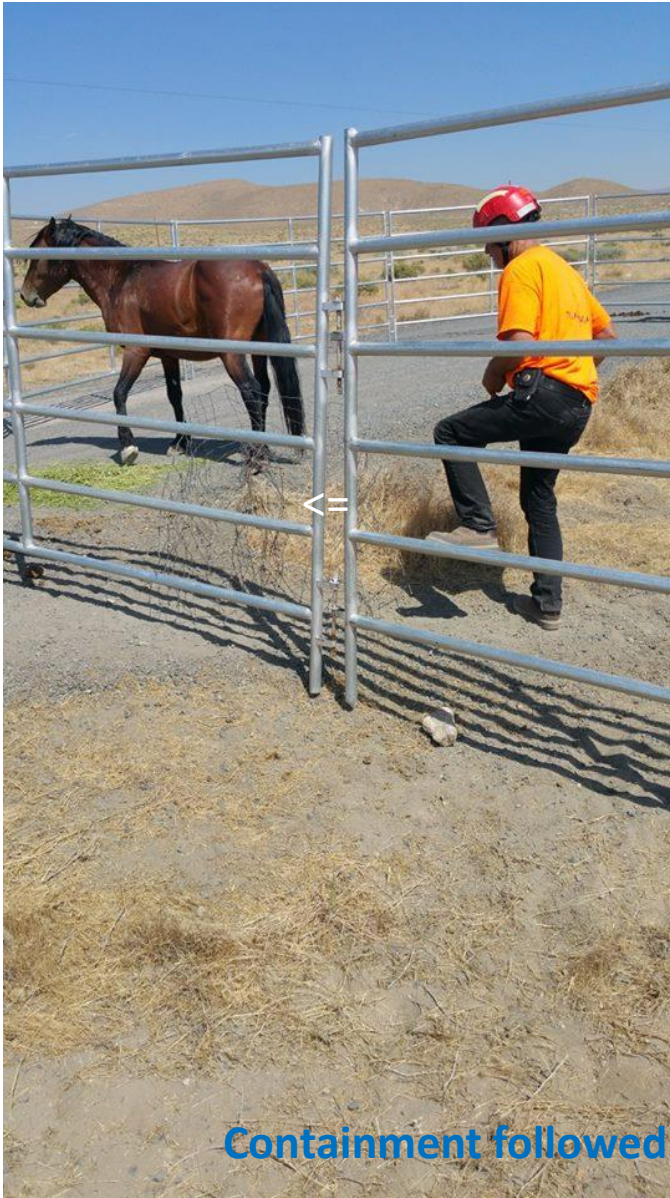


The brand inspector Cutting the wire free



**Horse with leg snared in wire fence**





Containment followed by methodical disentanglement.



Ready to release



# Incident security is important.







(US-50)

**Bolting after a bystander entered our working space (from the previous slide)**

# CRITICAL SAFETY PRIORITIES

- #1 – You
- #2 – Your Team / Other Responders
- #3 – Citizens / Bystanders
- #4 – The animal(s)

YOU CAN'T BE A HERO IF YOU BECOME PART OF THE EMERGENCY!



**Netting and panel containment. (Removing a horse from a residential area.)**





Horse contained and released back onto the range

# Secure containment is important.



**Horse snared on a guy wire hanging from the roof**





**Contained and Brand Inspector removing the wire**



# Foals often need special handling.



**NEVER just pick up a neo-natal foal. Use a blanket or Foad Glide.**

# Loading options.



**Volunteers and owners need to practice loading under varied conditions**



**Practicing with all trailer types**



(A horse will tend to follow the point in the netting.)



**Using construction netting to move horses.  
Proper shaping of netting helps direct focus.**



**Moving horses into a loading chute**





**Construction netting is also useful out in open spaces.**



Practice makes perfect.





**Work with your stakeholders to improve their skills.**

# Using chutes for loading.



Chutes can help contain and control horses that are difficult to load.





Injured range horse at large.

Setting up a long chute on the lane that empties into a small chute for loading.



# Closing a funnel chute



**“Taking away the corners.” When pressured, horses tend to charge unprotected corners.**



# No time for opposition reflex.



**Unhandled horse, lays down in the chute, so we position two trailers.**



# Outsmart the horse.



**When we ask him to load in the trailer we don't want, he jumps into the trailer that we do want.**

# Safe unloading approaches also have to be considered.



Horses can get excited when unloaded in unfamiliar places.

**Plan for containment during unloading.**

The real world presents challenges.







**Two inches of clearance on each side**

**WHAT KIND OF ANIMALS? WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**



**Stock trailer accident – load of pregnant cows. Containment is the priority.**

# High water operations.







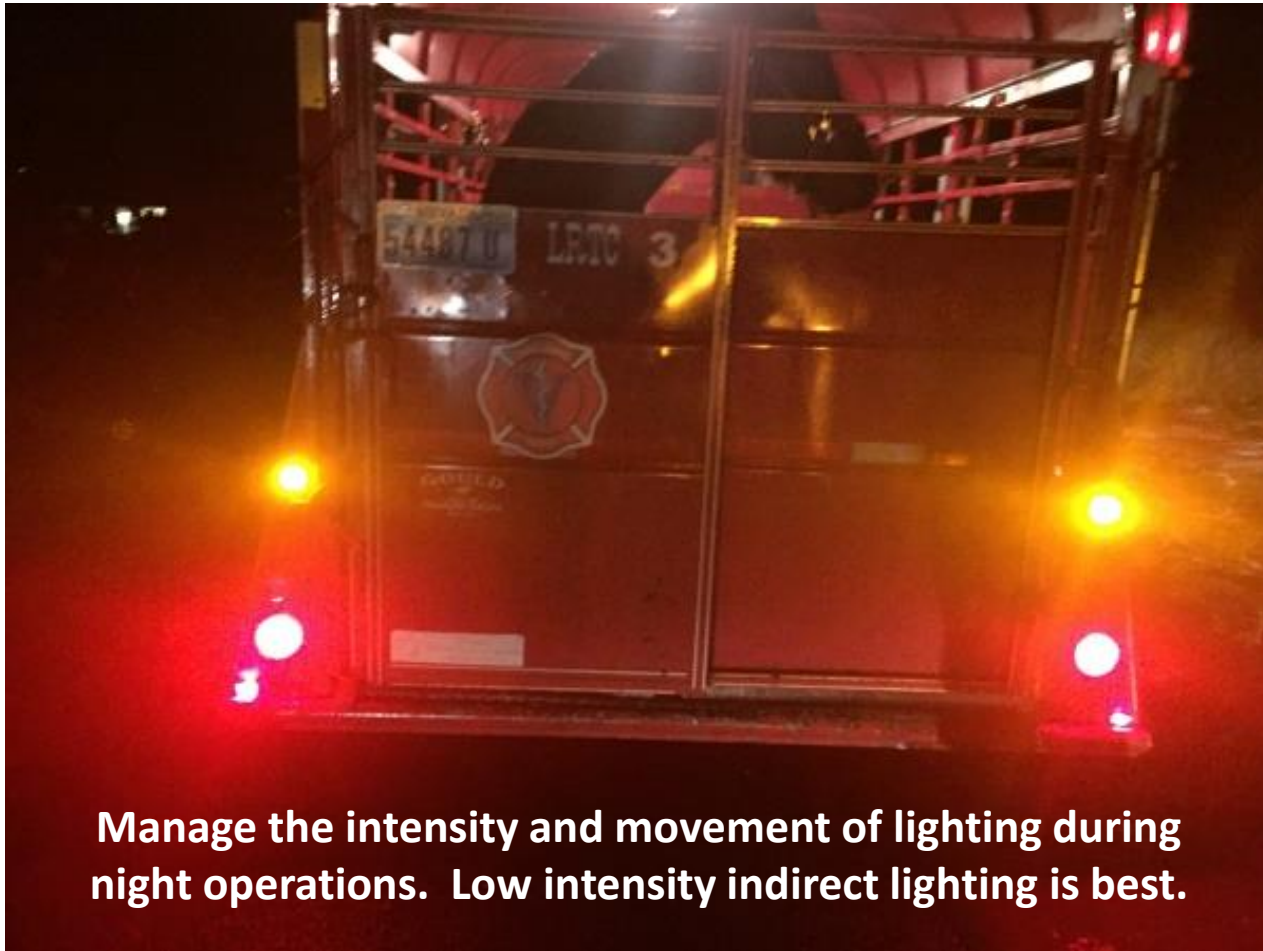
Extra caution is warranted. What is under the water? What is IN the water?

# Safety inspections are important.



**Annual inspection day. All credentialed trailers should be inspected.**

# Nighttime Operations



**Manage the intensity and movement of lighting during night operations. Low intensity indirect lighting is best.**



# Keys to success.

- **Size up the situation**
- **Develop a plan**
- **Secure the workspace (safety issues, distractions)**
- **Work as a team, communicate**
- **Work with purpose, but not like a predator**
- **Maintain a low level of energy**
- **Constantly evaluate the animals' response / behavior**
- **Always maintain a “safe exit” strategy**
- **Use “work it or leave it” decision making**
- **Safety check everything once the load is completed**

# Tactical Key Points.

- Constantly “read” the animal and adjust your pressure / energy
- Too much energy can increase unpredictability in horses
- Remember that a “frozen” horse can be provoked to flight or fight
- Too much pull on a lead can produce an opposition reflex
- Lead from the front, but if necessary drive from the rear
- Most livestock have blind spots to the rear and can react if surprised
- When driving any large animal, stay clear of the kick zone
- Keeping a horse calm while loading can reduce reactivity inside the trailer
- Loading chutes can improve operational safety and efficiency
- Remember that most livestock are herd animals and will move better as a group
- Sometimes a frightened, balky horse will follow another horse that is familiar
- Manage the intensity and movement of lighting during night operations

## ASSESS RISK-BENEFITS



**Ask yourself, "Is the benefit worth the risk?"**





Least Resistance Training Concepts, 2017