

Heart of Phoenix Equine Rescue Policy Regarding Euthanasia

Based on the AAEP's recommendations, Heart of Phoenix (HOP) adheres to the following:

All situations will be judged on the individual merits and circumstances surrounding the particular horse.

Heart of Phoenix and the Board of Directors ultimately have the sole responsibility for the majority of the rescue horses' care; however, euthanasia decisions may be made at the recommendation or with the agreement of an attending veterinarian and the director of the Heart of Phoenix.

Heart of Phoenix believes a horse should not have to endure conditions which negatively impact the animal's quality of life. The rescue serves a role as an animal advocate; therefore, euthanasia is a suitable option for horses without excellent life quality.

HOP acknowledges the AVMA's position on euthanasia of animals, which accepts that humane euthanasia of unwanted horses or those deemed unfit for adoption, is an acceptable procedure once all available alternatives have been explored with the client.

The following, in accordance with AVMA's and AAEP's guidelines, will be used to make a humane decisions regarding euthanasia of horses:

- A horse should not have to endure continuous or unmanageable pain from a condition that is chronic and incurable.
- A horse should not have to endure a medical or surgical condition that has a hopeless chance of survival.
- A horse should not have to remain alive if it has an unmanageable medical condition that renders it a hazard to itself or its handlers.
- A horse should not have to receive continuous analgesic medication for the relief of pain for the rest of its life.
- A horse should not have to endure a lifetime of continuous individual box stall confinement for prevention or relief of unmanageable pain or suffering.

In accordance with the AVMA's and AAEP's Techniques for

Euthanasia – The following techniques for performing euthanasia of horses by properly trained personnel are deemed acceptable:

1. Intravenous administration of an overdose of barbiturates
2. Gunshot to the brain (<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/IR00006594/00001>) Shearer JK, Nicoletti P. Humane euthanasia of sick, injured and/or debilitated livestock. University of Florida IFAS Extension)
3. Intravenous administration of a solution of concentrated potassium chloride (KCl) with the horse in a surgical plane of general anesthesia.
4. Alternative methods may be necessary in special circumstances.

In accordance with AVMA's guidelines:

Special Considerations for the Insured Horse and Cases Involving Multiple Practitioners:

Each insurance policy for a horse is a contract between the horse owner and the insurance company and will dictate the specific terms and conditions concerning the payment of a mortality claim. Careful consideration should be given to possible “conflicts of interest” as referenced in the Ethical and Professional Guidelines in the AAEP Resource Guide and Membership Directory. The attending, consulting and referring veterinarians should follow the Ethical and Professional Guidelines under section IV, “Attending, Consulting and Referring,” as described in the AAEP Resource Guide & Membership Directory.