7 Tips for surviving bonfire night with your horse



Nothing marks the start of winter quite like bonfire night; hot chocolate, toasting marshmallows, feasting on warming comfort food and of course wrapping up to watch a magical firework display. However, for horse owners, this romantic image may be a far cry from the reality of worrying about how to keep their horse safe and happy during firework season.

1. Be proactive – do your research and make a note of all organised events in your area. Whilst you can't plan for all private displays, it may be worth speaking to anyone lives directly next to your yard. Non-horsey neighbours may be unaware of how distressing fireworks can be for horses. Although they may be unlikely to cancel their plans, if you have good relationship with them they may be happy to consider choosing quieter fireworks and/ or avoid the direction of your field when setting them off. If you are concerned about your horse becoming very stressed, you could also consider talking to your vet about the possibility of sedation.

2. Although paramount at any time of year, firework season is the ideal time to review your fire safety and emergency procedures. You can also contact your local fire safety officer for advice.

3. If you know an event is going to be held close by, try to arrange for an experienced person to stay at the yard in case of any problems. Consider setting up a rota to share the responsibility (we all know displays are not restricted to the 5th November!), but try choose people who are also good as staying calm in a crisis. Make sure there is an up to date list of emergency contact numbers to hand, including out of hours contact details for the vet.

4. Many owners agonise over whether it is safer to keep their horse stabled or turn them out. There's no hard and fast rule here but where possible/ safe to do so, maintaining your horse's normal routine is probably the best option. However you may need to consider moving your horse to a different field or bringing him in early if there is a display close by. Try providing plenty of forage to help keep your horse busy – even if they are overweight, the benefits of an additional distraction may far outweigh the effect of a few additional calories, particularly in the short term.

5. Leaving the radio on can help to dull down loud noises. It's also possible to buy CD's to help desensitise your horse (and pets) to the sound of fireworks – this needs to be done gradually but may be a worthwhile while investment for next year (or ahead of New Year's Eve!).

6. If your horse is stabled leaving the lights on may help to prevent them from being startled by bright flashes.

7. Check field your horse’s field daily for debris and spent fireworks.

Popular Blogs



Competing with gastric ulcers: What you need to know

Read now

The importance of lysine for overweight horses

Read now

Breaking down the diet: What ex-racehorses need to thrive

Read now

Everything you need to know about laminitis

Read now

What to do when laminitis strikes

Read now

Source URL:
https://www.spillers-feeds.com/articles/7-tips-surviving-bonfire-night-your-horse