

Equine Guelph Large Animal Emergency Rescue Course Description: Awareness/Operational Training

In today's society, responding to incidents involving animals is both an expectation and an acknowledgement that such incidents will likely involve people putting themselves and others at risk.

All large animal incidents regardless of cause or scope, present a risk of injury to responders. Through proper training of best practices and the use of specialized rescue equipment we significantly mitigate these risks and improve the odds of a favorable outcome for both animals and responders. By keeping responders safe, we improve our capacity to keep animals safe.

The Awareness/Operational level course is designed to meet the specific needs of the host fire department. The training team works closely with the host department and takes into account the host site, available heavy equipment and/or other specialized equipment in designing the training program.

Our programs include an "In Class" component to introduce basic animal behaviour, animal handling techniques, animal restraint and confinement techniques, basic anatomy and a discussion on the roles of others at an animal incident i.e. owners, veterinarians, and the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA). These sessions are dynamic and form the foundation for the practical components.

Practical sessions are emphasized in the Awareness/Operational level course. Demonstrations of large animal manipulation techniques such as forward and rear assists, sideways drags and cast horse rolls are taught always with a focus on safety for both humans and animals and the general welfare of the animal. The application of these manipulations in a confined space and/or trench rescue scenario is also discussed. Participants also take part in rotations addressing animal behaviour, approach, basic handling (emergency halters), restraint & leading animals, kick zones and blind zones.

The "In Class" and practical sessions are then put into practice in a rescue scenario that uses Rusti a 600 pound horse mannequin. Scenarios are somewhat site specific and can include a horse and rider that have fallen in a ditch, creek or mud hole, an overturned trailer with a horse and foal inside, a horse caught in a well, etc. Group sizes are kept to a manageable size to ensure that everyone gets to practice the manipulation techniques. All exercises are conducted using the Incident Command system. All manipulation techniques are grounded in best management practices.

This Awareness/Operational level course is designed to ensure a comprehensive educational process by delivering on the qualities of Knowledge, Best Practice and Application.