



May 19, 2011

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service

Veterinary Services

Centers for  
Epidemiology and  
Animal Health

Natural Resources  
Research Center  
2150 Centre Avenue  
Building B  
Mail Stop 2E7  
Fort Collins, CO  
80526-8117

970-494-7588

TO: Andrew Perraut  
Program Analyst  
Office of Management and Budget, Desk Officer

THROUGH: Ruth Brown  
Departmental Clearance Officer

FROM: Bruce Wagner, PhD *BW*  
National Animal Health Monitoring System Director  
Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health  
Veterinary Services

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Approval of a New Information Collection for  
"National Animal Health Monitoring System;  
Emergency Epidemiologic Investigations"

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) was preparing to submit to OMB an information collection request for a regular 3 year approval for "Emergency Epidemiologic Investigations." The 60-day Federal Register Notice was published on May 17, 2011.

In response to the recent outbreak of equine herpesvirus (EHV) APHIS is requesting emergency approval for this information collection activity.

Industry associations such as the American Horse Council and the American Association of Equine Practitioners, as well as State Animal Health Officials, have requested APHIS' assistance with this multi-state outbreak. This outbreak has been associated with multiple equine deaths in multiple States and has severely impacted the industry. Currently, there is a general lack of scientifically valid data associated with this outbreak. Initial observations of the progress of the disease over the last week indicate a high potential for this disease to spread beyond the horses that were initially exposed to the disease. It is critical for APHIS to collect appropriate epidemiologic information in order to help understand the disease spread and provide information for controlling this outbreak. This emergency information collection activity will be used to help States:



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- Identify the scope of the problem.
- Define and describe the affected population and the susceptible population.
- Predict or detect trends in disease emergence and movement.
- Understand the risk factors for disease.
- Estimate the cost of disease control and develop intervention options.
- Make recommendations for disease control.
- Provide lessons learned and guidance on the best ways to avoid future outbreaks based on a thorough analysis of data from the current outbreaks.

Approval to collect this information is needed immediately to protect the North American equine population from the continued spread of EHV and to allow for better understanding of how to reduce the impact of this disease agent in the future. Therefore, we are requesting emergency approval by June 1, 2011.

APHIS will resubmit this collection for a 3-year approval following the close of the comment period on July 18, 2011.

Thank you for your time and consideration.