

Fall and Winter LNT/Education

The weather has changed and we have colder and wetter riding and horse keeping chores. Here are a few suggestions.

1. When riding, stay warm and dry by being prepared. Carry rain clothes, gloves, and a hat or helmet.
2. Wear bright colors during hunting season and talk with hunters about keeping a clean camp and using Leave No Trace practices.
3. Clean and oil your tack. Check for wear (split leather) and replace if necessary. Don't wait for it to get weaker and break apart! You may end up on the ground or have a runaway horse if equipment breaks.
4. Ride on hardened trails or roads. Be responsible and stay off muddy trails. Stay on the trail. Don't take shortcuts onto soft surfaces.
5. Ride the CENTER of the trail. Make an effort to train your horse to go through the mud puddles. Eventually, they will learn not to step aside and off the trail causing the trail to be widened. Widening trails causes erosion and damages plants.

Mud

Recipe for mud: 1 part soil + 2 parts water + 1 part manure

Horse keeping and Mud Management

Remove water

Keep rainwater away from your barn and paddock areas. Use gutters to channel rain off of the roof and drain into downspouts away from the barn/paddocks.

Remove manure

Pick up manure and remove it from all wet areas in and around your barn and paddock areas. The best solution is to move it into a covered manure-composting bin. (Contact Thurston County Conservation for construction information.) Other solutions include moving the manure to a dry location away from runoff areas to a covered manure pile. When the manure is composted (@ 6 months) it can be spread onto a pasture during the growing season.

Prevent Mud

Prevent muddy paddocks by removing the water and manure then install several inches of 5/8" minus gravel and/or road fabric.

Mud is hazardous to you and your horses' health.

- It provides a breeding ground for flies
- It causes thrush, rain scald, and other fungal problems
- Dried mud produces mold and can cause respiratory problems for your horse or YOU.