



Horse News and Views

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- ◆ A horse owner indicated that they were using **hydrated lime** daily as a disinfectant in wet areas of horse stalls. Lime in the hydrated form is hygroscopic (absorbs water) and produces a dry alkaline environment. It is often used to treat barns when animals are outside and the barn has been cleaned first. It is **not** recommended for use on a daily basis because of the possibility of horses inhaling the dry powder or feed becoming contaminated. The use of lime gives a false sense of security. Disinfection of barns effectively requires removal of all bedding and organic material; washing the barn down with soap; lots of scrubbing to remove the remaining organic material from all surfaces and, then, the use of a suitable disinfectant. Many disinfectants are quickly neutralized if organic material like bedding and manure still remain. If lime is used in livestock buildings, caution should be exercised since it can be caustic. Long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and eye protection should be worn while handling and applying this material. A toxic particle dust mask is also recommended.
- ◆ Lime as a general disinfectant actually reduces bacterial numbers rather than eliminating them. It only lasts about 2 days and there is at least one study that found it didn't work at all when sawdust was the bedding type.

If owners are trying to reduce ammonia in stalls, newer generation stall deodorizers can be used. Those containing zeolite, which is non toxic, trap the ammonia molecule in a way that will release it again as a controlled nitrogen source if the material is spread on fields.
(Ref: Dr. Eleanor M. Kellon, personal communication)

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