

Cobalt Testing Race Horses

At their September 4, 2014 meeting the Indiana Horse Racing Commission voted unanimously to approve the RMTC's recommended threshold level of 25 ppb for cobalt.

While the new regulation does not become effective until September 30, 2014, the Commission made staff available at the Indiana Grand Test Barn on Sept 10, so that trainers could bring their horses in for testing. Only a few took advantage of the testing.

Dr. Angela Demaree, Commission Equine Medical Director, will release results to the trainer of record upon receipt from the testing laboratory.

It's Unanimous: Indiana Commission Votes to Regulate Cobalt Cobalt Regulations Effective Sept. 30, 2014

At its September 4, 2014 public meeting, the Indiana Horse Racing Commission voted 3-0 to approve rules to regulate cobalt levels in race horses. Cobalt is a naturally occurring trace mineral. The excessive administration of cobalt may enhance the performance of, and potentially become hazardous to, the horse.

The Commission's action is based on recommendations in a staff report prepared by its Executive Director, Joe Gorajec. The report, which can be accessed at www.in.gov/hrc, indicates that results of blood tests from horses racing this season at Hoosier Park and Indiana Grand indicate that excessive levels of cobalt in horses is jeopardizing the integrity of Indiana's racing product and endangering the health and welfare of its horses.

"The integrity of our racing product and welfare of our horses are of paramount importance to us. The Commission has now taken appropriate action to address this issue," said Joe Gorajec, Executive Director.

The threshold level will be 25 parts per billion (ppb) and enforcement of the new regulation will begin with races conducted on September 30, 2014. Any trainer whose horse's blood tests high for cobalt will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include up to a one-year suspension, as well as a fine and forfeiture of the purse. The samples will be tested at the University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Lexington, Kentucky.

The Commission would like to thank RMTC's Executive Director Dr. Dionne Benson; LGC Science, Inc. Laboratory Director, Dr. Richard Sams; and the University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for their invaluable assistance. In addition, the Commission is grateful to the Kentucky Equine Drug Research Council and the RMTC for providing the funding of the study which has led to the threshold level.