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## **News Release**

### **Equine athletes deserve protection while racing and dignity in retirement**

Toronto ON – A key component of the mission of the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) is to govern horse racing in a manner that protects the health and enhances the safety of the horse and the industry participants. Various ORC programs and protocols are in place to ensure that horses, as well as human participants, are protected.

These range from protocols to monitor horses in extreme weather, to new rules introduced in 2009 restricting the urging of horses during racing. As well, the ORC's vigilant equine medication control program reinforces the message that the acquisition, possession and administration of illegal and non-therapeutic drugs will not be tolerated. "These efforts not only ensure the fairness of racing, in identifying illegal medications", said ORC Chair Rod Seiling. "They also protect the health of the horse. "

While its jurisdiction on matters concerning the horse ceases when it stops racing, the ORC believes that the welfare, safety and dignity of the horse should continue in retirement. "That's why the Board of the ORC has enthusiastically supported racehorse adoption and placement programs," said Seiling.

In 2006 (thoroughbred) and 2008 (standardbred) the ORC Board approved motions that a percentage of all purses monies paid be allocated for the benefit of retired racehorses. These organizations are:

**Standardbred - Ontario Standardbred Adoption Society** [www.osas.ca](http://www.osas.ca)

**Thoroughbred - LongRun Thoroughbred Retirement Society**  
[www.longrunretirement.com](http://www.longrunretirement.com)

Seiling said the ORC hopes owners consider these options. "It not only gives the horse a new home and perhaps a new career, it makes sense from a practical point of view. As referenced in an ORC Notice to the Industry (July 23), new federal regulations have imposed restrictions on sending horses for processing."

Interested owners should contact the adoption societies for more information.

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