

Largest track operator adopts no-slaughter policy

Slaughter participants no longer welcome at racetracks owned by Magna Entertainment Corp.

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Magna Entertainment Corp. (MEC), North America's largest owner and operator of horse racetracks, announced on October 10 that it has formally adopted a company-wide policy promoting the humane treatment of racehorses. Under the new policy, any trainer or owner stabling at an MEC facility who directly or indirectly participates in the transport of a horse from an MEC facility to either a slaughterhouse or an auction house engaged in selling horses for slaughter will be prohibited from having stalls at any MEC facility. The policy also applies to any actions related to the transport of a horse from an MEC facility where the ultimate intended result is the horse's slaughter.

Ron Charles, MEC chief operating officer and president of California's Santa Anita Park, says, "MEC is extremely pleased to formally adopt a policy to further encourage the humane treatment of racehorses. We intend this to be one in a series of steps that will be taken in an effort to protect our equine athletes."

Frank Stronach, MEC chairman and chief executive officer, adds, "The goal of the policy is to forewarn industry participants who participate in the slaughter of racehorses that they are not welcome at any of our facilities across the country. I hope other racetrack owners formally adopt similar policies".

MEC owns and/or operates 10 U.S.-based racetracks including Maryland's Pimlico Race Course, home of the Preakness Stakes; California's Santa Anita Park, which is hosting the upcoming Breeders' Cup Classic; and Florida's Gulfstream Park, home to the Florida Derby.