

Microchipping Rules Oct 2020

Are you organised following the new microchipping rules that came in on 1st October 2020? Now all horses, irrespective of age should be microchipped and registered with the government central equine database. You can check if your horse is registered at www.equineregister.co.uk and follow our flowchart to check that you have satisfied the new guidelines.



If your horse needs a microchip, our equine vets can effortlessly insert one at our clinic or your yard for the price of £25 (plus VAT).

Microchips, does your horse need one?

Horse microchips or transponders are the size of a grain of rice, and are usually placed on the middle third of the crest of the neck. They contain a small computer, which transmits a 15-digit code to a reader when scanned. This code is unique, and can be used to identify an animal throughout their life.

Since July 2009, all horses must have a microchip when they are issued a new passport, however; for horses that had a passport issued

before 2009, they may have a passport without a microchip. As of October 2020, by law, all horses must have a microchip, meaning that horses over 11 years of age which do not have a microchip, will need one inserting.

The change in rules has coincided with the creation of the central equine database, which is accessible at www.equineregister.co.uk. All UK passport-issuing organisations (PIOs) have provided this central database with the microchip numbers of horses that are registered with them. This is an important step aimed to centralise all of the collected microchip data. In the event of a lost or stolen horse (every owner's worst nightmare, I think we will all agree), if a vet scanned a microchip, they would have to ring around each PIO to find which one held the owners details. As there are over 50 separate PIOs, this isn't an easy task! Now a horse can be scanned, checked on the equine register, bringing up the details of which passport organisation has the owners details, therefore reuniting the animal with the owner without delay.

How do I comply?

First check if your horses has a microchip, this can be found in the passport, and is usually labelled transponder code, or on the markings page underneath a barcode. If you are unsure, one of our vets can scan your horse for a microchip.

If your horse has a microchip, then check it is registered at www.equineregister.co.uk . If it is, you are compliant with the law. If not, you may need to contact your passport agency to update them with the number.

If your horse doesn't have a microchip, our equine vets can easily implant one by a quick injection. Only a vet is legally allowed to microchip a horse. Once inserted you will need to inform your passport agency of the microchip number (some require a form completing by the vet, some ask for the passport to be sent back for updating).

Private Microchip Databases

One final comment is about private databases such as PETtrac, Petlog or Identibase, which also record pet microchips. These link the microchip number to an owners phone number, and often have 24/7 phonedlines, useful if your horse is lost out of hours! It is not a legal requirement however to be registered with these private databases. When we microchip you horse, we are able to register the chip number to the phone number on your account with PETtrac.