



TEXAS RACING COMMISSION
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PUBLIC NOTICE

BUTE RULE REVISION

As of January 1, 2012, the threshold level for phenylbutazone, or “bute”, will be lowered from 5 micrograms to 2 micrograms per milliliter of plasma or serum. The Commission has implemented this lower level to facilitate a more accurate pre-race assessment of each horse’s soundness by TxRC veterinarians. The Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association has also adopted this lower level for all graded stakes races.

The lower level is generally consistent with a 24 hour prior administration, intravenously, of a 2 gram dose of phenylbutazone. However, there are biological differences in how individual horses metabolize this drug that may affect the resulting test results. In order to allow trainers to recognize these differences, the Commission is implementing a six month “launch” period. During the launch period, the Commission will notify trainers of test results above 2 micrograms per milliliter so that the trainer or administering veterinarian may make an appropriate adjustment to the administration regimen. Test results in excess of 5 micrograms will remain subject to the same penalties applied prior to the launch period. In no instance should a trainer or veterinarian administer phenylbutazone to a horse closer than 24 hours prior to post time of the race in which it is participating.

Penalties during the launch period remain as currently written for levels between 5 and 9.9 and then levels at 10 or above. At the end of the six month adjustment or launch period levels between 2.0 and 9.9 will be consistent with current penalties for 5.0 to 9.9 overages and penalties for levels at 10 micrograms or greater will carry the same penalties as are currently enforced.