

# SCAR RULE

## DEFINITION AND VIOLATIONS\*

*\*VIOLATIONS SEEN BY USDA VETERINARY MEDICAL OFFICERS AT INSPECTED SHOWS IN 2007*

- **Horse Protection Act (HPA) – December 9, 1970**
- **Hearing before the Committee on Commerce - United States Senate - Ninety-Third Congress (convened on May 2, 1973)**
- **Proposal to amend HPA so as to prohibit scars – “We feel this would be a strong deterrent against soring during the training period in the home barn.”**
- **As an alternative to a potential amendment to the HPA prohibiting scars, the TWH industry promised to impose and enforce its own ‘scar rules’...**
- **The TWH industry’s enforcement of its own scar rules was unsuccessful, so the ‘scar rule’ was added to USDA’s Horse Protection Regulations...**

**Federal Register, Vol. 44, No. 83 - April 27, 1979 (Final Scar Rule):**

**“The Department has recently reviewed horse industry’s enforcement of its own scar rules and have found it to be lax or nonexistent. Many 2-year-old, 3-year-old, and 4-year-old horses are being found to have scars on their pasterns when inspected by Department veterinarians. Horses of these age groups were foaled after the Horse Protection Act of 1970, and some were foaled after the Horse Protection Amendments of 1976 were enacted, and should, therefore, carry no scars on their pasterns. Due to lack of enforcement of its scar rules by the horse industry, the Department has determined to add a scar rule to the regulations and will initiate a policy of strict enforcement of the rule.”**

**“The Department would point out to the horse industry that the scar rule applies only to horses that were foaled and trained well after the passage of the Horse Protection Act of 1970, and after the passage of the 1976 Horse Protection Act amendments. Such horses should therefore bear no scars whatsoever if the law were being complied with.”**

# Scar Rule

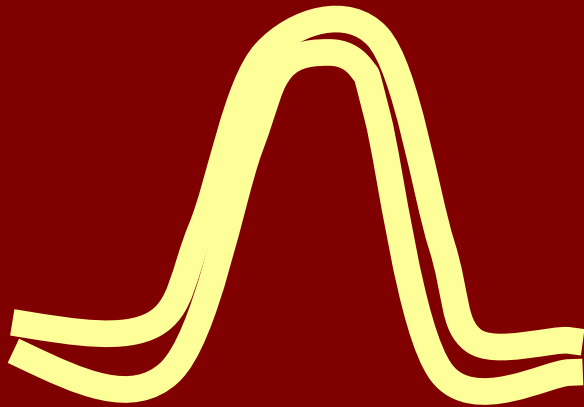
- **11.3:** The scar rule applies to all horses born on or after October 1, 1975. Horses subject to this rule that do not meet the following scar rule criteria shall be considered to be "sore" and are subject to all prohibitions of section 5 of the Act. The scar rule criteria are as follows:
  - (a) The anterior and anterior-lateral surfaces of the fore pasterns (extensor surface) must be free of bilateral granulomas, other bilateral pathological evidence of inflammation, and other bilateral evidence of abuse indicative of soring including, but not limited to, excessive loss of hair.
  - (b) The posterior surfaces of the pasterns (flexor surface), including the sulcus or "pocket" may show bilateral areas of uniformly thickened epithelial tissue if such areas are free of proliferating granuloma tissue, irritation, moisture, edema, or other evidence of inflammation.



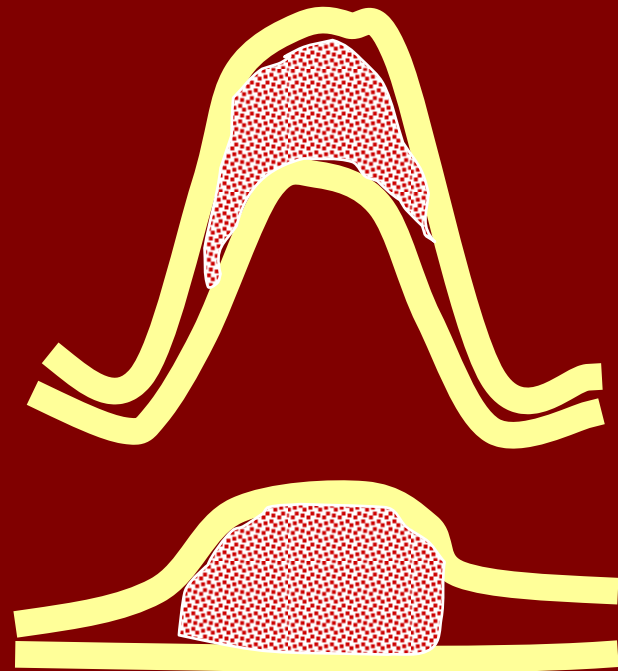
- **Horses found to be in violation of the scar rule are legally 'sore'.**
- **Keep in mind that for a horse to be out of compliance with the scar rule, it must be out of compliance on both forelimbs.**
- **Each limb is evaluated independently, and the lesions need not be the same nor similar on both forelimbs to constitute a scar rule violation.**

# SCAR RULE

Uniformly Thickened Tissue



Inflamed Tissue





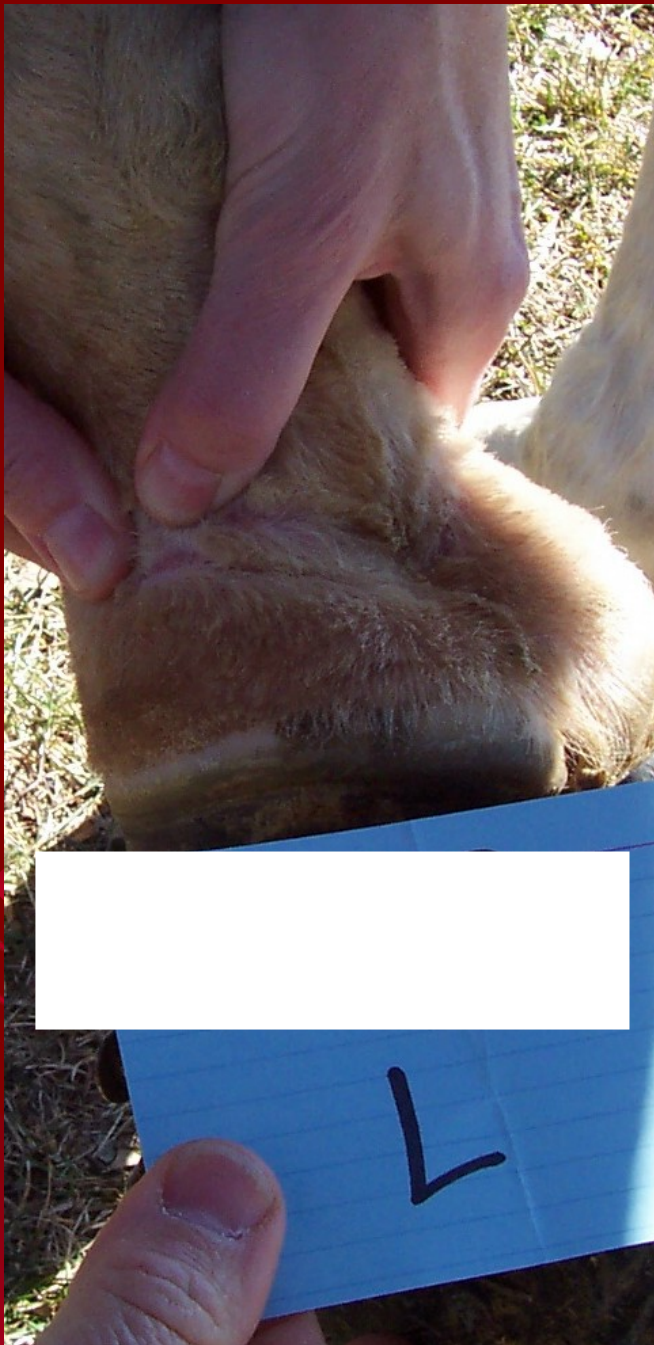
This is the visual appearance of skin thickness changes associated with no known natural disease processes.

The visual appearance of this tissue alone, however, does not indicate a scar rule violation; the tissue must also be examined by palpation.





This pastern shows the classic "V" shaped granulomas that are only seen on the pasterns of horses that have been subjected to soring practices.



Digital separation of the hairs on this pastern was necessary to clearly visualize the extent of this horse's inflammatory response to the abuse of soring.

Also visible is the exfoliation of inflamed surface layers of skin - commonly referred to as "scurf".





This pastern shows the classic "V" shaped granulomas that are only seen on the pasterns of horses that have been subjected to soring. In addition, note the several areas showing dried serum exudate.



Most visible on this pastern is a vertically-oriented single granuloma that is only seen on the pasterns of horses that have been subjected to soring. Additionally, several “V” shaped granulomas are present, but not readily visible in the photo; again indicating the importance of not relying on visual examination alone.





This pastern shows the classic “V” shaped granulomas that are only seen on the pasterns of horses that have been subjected to soring.





This pastern shows the classic "V" shaped granulomas that are only seen on the pasterns of horses that have been subjected to soring.



This pastern shows a vertically-oriented single granuloma, as well as multiple “V” shaped granulomas that are only seen on the pasterns of horses that have been subjected to soring.





This pastern shows multiple granulomas indicative of soring.

Without carefully lifting the hairs as shown, these scars would not be as readily visible.



Here are  
multiple granulomas  
and excessive  
hair loss indicative of  
soring





Here are  
multiple granulomas  
and excessive  
hair loss indicative of  
soring



Here are  
multiple granulomas  
and excessive  
hair loss indicative of  
soring





Here are  
multiple granulomas  
and excessive  
hair loss indicative of  
Soring.



This is a pastern that has been laser-treated to try to remove scar tissue in an attempt to “return the horse to compliance with the scar rule”. Even though much of the scarred tissue was removed, this horse has been subjected to soring.





This pastern shows  
excessive loss of hair  
and  
multiple granulomas.



This pastern shows  
excessive loss of hair  
and  
multiple granulomas.



This pastern shows  
excessive loss of hair  
and  
multiple granulomas.





This limb has three long granulomas, each indicative of soring, that cannot be detected by visual examination alone.



This horse has long hair making it difficult to see the two vertical scars that are evidence of soring.





Here is skin damaged from soring that can only be visualized by separating the hairs and utilization of a good light source...

...the scars are easily palpable, again indicating the importance of not relying on visual examination alone.



**2007**

**This 16 year old horse shows no signs of soring. This picture was taken to illustrate that the padded Tennessee Walking Horse need not be subjected to soring.**





**2007**

**This limb shows scars indicative of soring that are on both the posterior and lateral surfaces of the pastern.**





**2007**

**This limb shows multiple vertical and V shaped scars, as well as excessive loss of hair, that are indicative of soring.**



**2007**

**This limb demonstrates redness, serum exudate, excessive loss of hair, and multiple granulomas.**

**All of these things are indicative of soring.**

[Redacted]

AGE:  
5yrs

7/13/07





**2007**

**This limb has multiple vertical and V shaped scars, as well as serum exudate, all of which are indicative of soring.**



**2007**

**This limb demonstrates redness, serum exudate, excessive loss of hair, and multiple scars.**

**All of these things are indicative of soring.**





**2007**

**This limb demonstrates redness, serum exudate, excessive loss of hair, and multiple granulomas.**

**All of these things are indicative of soring.**



**2007**

**This limb demonstrates redness, serum exudate, excessive loss of hair, and multiple granulomas.**

**All of these things are indicative of soring.**

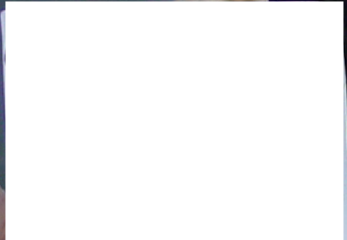




**2007**

**This limb shows granulomas indicative of soring that are on both the posterior and lateral surfaces of the pastern.**





1/27/07

L

APR 27 2007





4/28/07

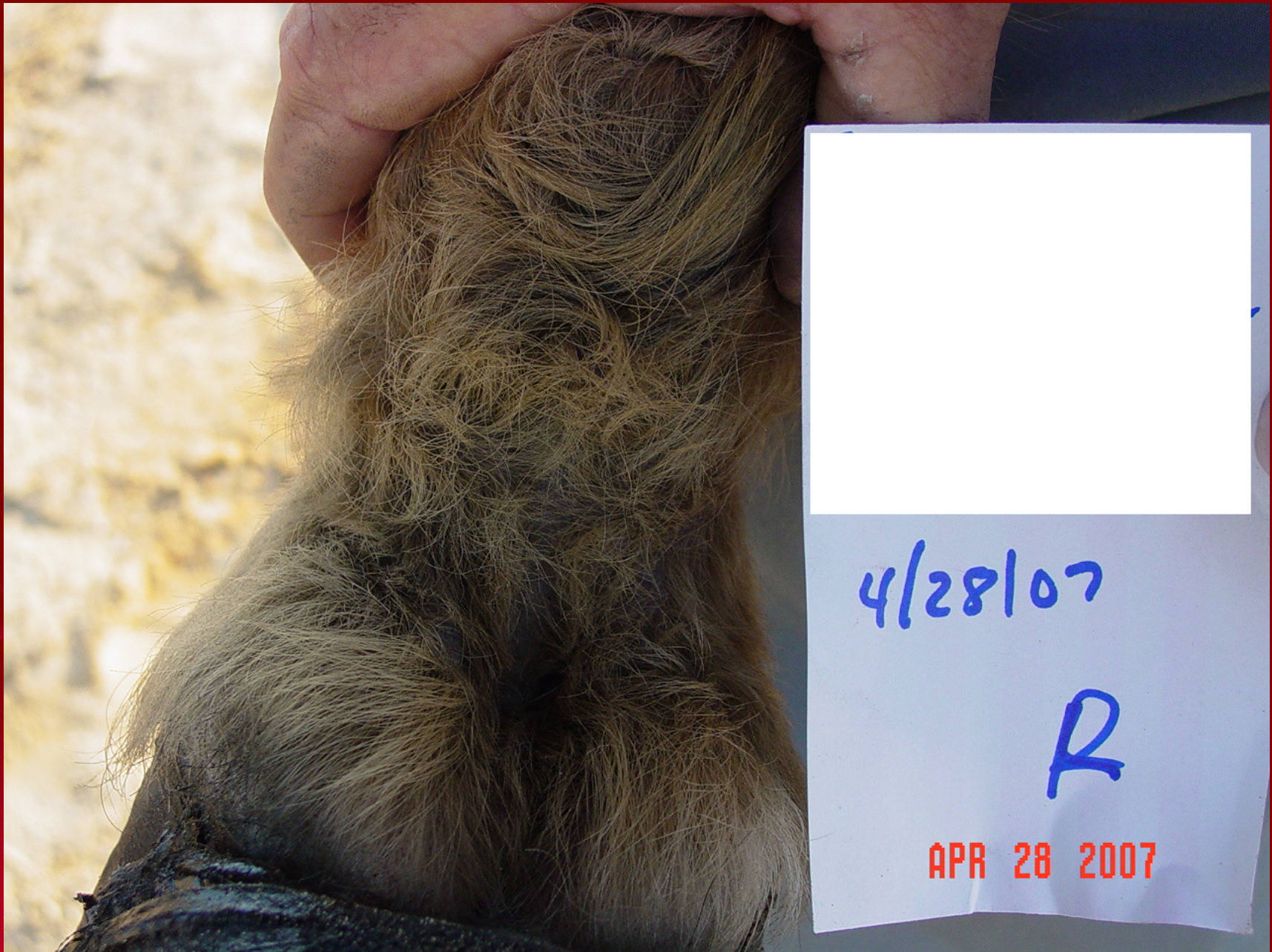
R ↘

APR 28 2007









4/28/07

R

APR 28 2007





4/26

APR 26 2007





2007

08/24/2007 08:19





2007

08/25/2007 20:27






7/13/07

R

2007. 7. 13 16:54



A close-up photograph of a horse's neck, showing the skin and hair. A person's hand is holding a pink rectangular label in front of the horse's neck. The label has two white rectangular redaction boxes. The date '7/13/07' is handwritten in purple ink on the label. To the right of the lower redaction box, the letter 'L' is handwritten in purple ink. The background shows a person's leg in blue pants and a dark boot, and a dirt floor.

7/13/07

L

2007. 7. 13 17:37





[Redacted]  
7/13/07  
[Redacted]

| 2007. 7. 13 16:45





[Redacted]

7/13/07

[Redacted]

L

2007. 7. 13 16:36





2007. 7. 13 18:03



7/13/07

2007. 7. 13 20:08





7/13/07

2007.7.13 18:38





[Redacted]

7/13/07

AGE:

5yr

2007.7.13 17:52





2000. 3. 19 12:25





2000. 3. 18 18:13





2/3/07

R

2000. 3. 19 11:13



7/14/07

L

3

2007. 7. 14 20:56





2007. 7. 14 23:05





2007. 7. 14 22:04



3/12/07





3/12/07



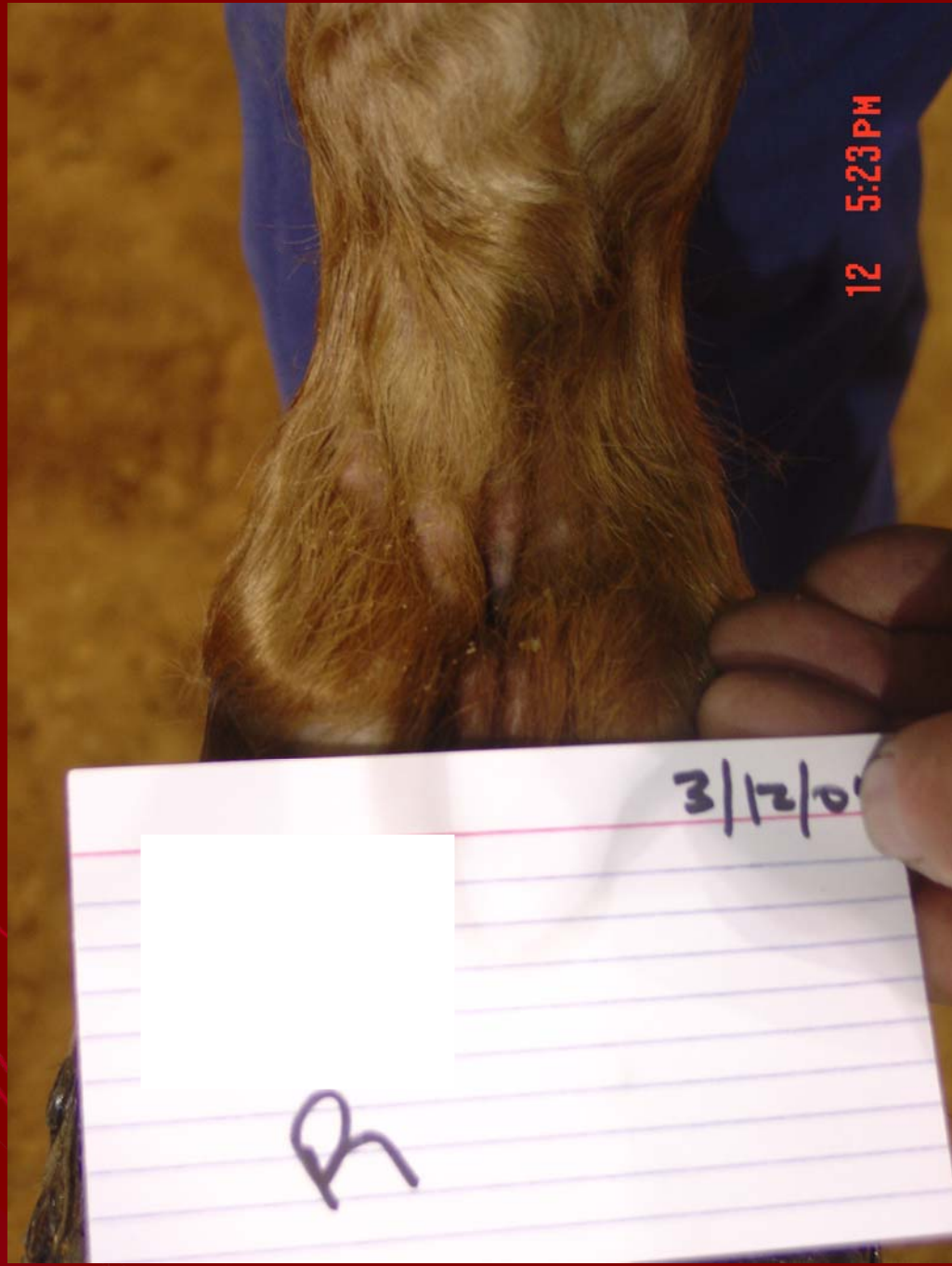
12 4:47 PM



3/12/07

12 4:57 PM







[Redacted text]







A close-up photograph of a dark-furred animal's neck, possibly a dog or cat, showing a small, light-colored lesion or mark on the skin. A person's hand is holding a white identification tag in front of the neck. The tag has handwritten text and a symbol. The background is a grassy field.

10/27/07

L

27 3:57 PM



10127107

L

27

6:04 PM





10/15/07

R

5 7:01 PM





[Redacted]

1015107

[Redacted]

R

5 8:04 PM

A close-up photograph of a horse's lower leg and hoof area. The horse has light-colored hair on its lower leg and a dark hoof. A person's hand is holding a white, lined paper tag in front of the horse's leg. The tag has the number "1016103" written in blue ink. The background is a wooden wall. A red timestamp "6 5:56 PM" is visible in the bottom right corner.

1016103

6 5:56 PM





10/4/07

L

4 10:18 PM




1016107

L

6

6:28 PM



A close-up photograph of a dark horse's neck. Two hands are visible, one on the left and one on the right, holding a piece of white lined paper. The paper has the number '1015107' written in brown ink. In the bottom right corner of the paper, there is a red digital timestamp '5 6:42 PM'. There are two white rectangular redaction boxes on the paper, one above and one below the handwritten number.

1015107

5 6:42 PM





1014107

L

4 9:21 PM



A close-up photograph of a dark-furred animal's neck, likely a dog, showing a skin lesion. The lesion is a reddish, moist, and irregularly shaped area on the skin, possibly a tumor or a severe infection. A person's hand is visible on the right side of the frame, holding a piece of lined paper. The background is dark and out of focus.

10/14/07

R

4

9:08 PM

A close-up photograph of a horse's lower leg and hoof area. The horse's coat is dark brown or black. A person's hand is visible on the left side, holding a piece of lined paper. The paper has handwritten text and a date. There are two white rectangular redaction boxes on the paper. The background is a reddish-brown surface, possibly a stable floor.

10/15/07

L

5 5:47 PM




A close-up photograph of the hindquarters of a dark-colored horse. A person's hand is visible on the right side, with the index finger pointing towards a distinct purple or magenta mark on the horse's skin. The mark is located between the two hind legs, near the tailhead. The horse's coat is dark and appears to be black or dark bay. The background is a light-colored, textured surface, possibly wood shavings or straw bedding. A white piece of lined paper is held in front of the horse's hindquarters, with the handwritten number '10/4/07' visible on it. A red digital timestamp '4 8:16 PM' is located in the bottom right corner of the image.

10/4/07

4 8:16 PM





10/14/07

L

4 7:52 PM





1015107

R

5 8:16 PM






10/5/07

R

5 9:42 PM





1016107

L

6 5:29 PM





1016107

R

6 5:41 PM





10/6107

6 7:40 PM

# Remember:

- **Horses found to be in violation of the scar rule are legally ‘sore’.**
- **The scar rule applies to all horses born on or after October 1, 1975.**
- **“...Such horses should therefore bear no scars whatsoever if the law were being complied with.”**