



### **Pierce County Request for Proposals No. 149, Boarding/Care/Case Management Services for Horses.**

The Auditor has announced the selection of four owners of equine facilities to contract with the county as temporary housing rescued, abused and neglected horses and other animals. They include: E&K Stables; Pegasus Program; Rusty Bar Ranch; and Tacoma Equine Hospital. These are five year, annual renewable contracts, and the county will pay only for services used.

The decision followed months of research and two "horse summits" in Graham and the Key Peninsula to discuss how to handle this growing problem.

"When we have to impound animals, it is not a happy situation for either the owners or the animals. However, it is imperative that we have well-equipped, safe places to house these animals when removal is necessary," Shabro said. "When we have these contracts in place, we're confident that the animals will be well cared for until the situation is resolved."

Animal Services has occasionally had to use stables throughout the region to house impounded horses. "Since rescues are usually sudden, emergency situations, the county needed a more formal arrangement in place when this occurs." Tim Anderson, Animal Control Supervisor, said. "Consequently, a request for proposal was issued in November 2008, and seven responded."

A screening team toured the seven facilities in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties on January 27<sup>th</sup> and February 4<sup>th</sup>. The team consisted of Animal Services' personnel, an equine veterinarian and a conservation district representative. The team rated the facilities on such criteria as cleanliness, experience, proximity to Pierce County, cost, number of animals that could be housed, availability of quarantine space and staff training. "We were impressed with the quality of facilities. If applicants who were not chosen what to have us keep their applications on file, we will consider them for future reference as a service provider," Shabro said.