ATTENTION TRAINERS AND EXERCISE RIDERS: ALL HELMETS AND SAFETY VESTS MUST MEET CURRENT SAFETY STANDARDS

The New York State Gaming Commission is launching a program to ensure that the safety equipment worn by exercise riders – helmets and safety vests - meet current safety standards. The safety equipment will be subject to random inspections by the NYS Gaming Commission. DEADLINE FOR COMPLIANCE IS THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2017. To determine if the equipment meets the necessary standards, follow the instructions below.

NYTHA SUBSIDY PROGRAM: The safety equipment program is one of many core recommendations from the Operational Risk Assessment sponsored by the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association (NYTHA) and the NY Jockey Injury Compensation Fund, and conducted by Marsh Risk Consulting. The recommendations are designed to provide a safer work environment for exercise riders and jockeys and, by extension, the horses. To offset the cost of replacing equipment, NYTHA will provide a $125 voucher toward the purchase of each helmet and a $125 voucher toward the purchase of each vest that is defective or not up to code. Exercise riders can stop by the NYTHA Office at Belmont Park, see Christina Silva in the RTCA Office by Gate 6 at Belmont, or go to the BEST Office in the Rec Hall on Union Ave. in Saratoga to pick up the vouchers. They must present their badge, and the defective equipment must be turned in when the voucher is redeemed. The exercise rider is responsible for the balance due on the helmet or vest after the voucher is applied. The vouchers are not transferable, and there is a limit of one helmet and one vest voucher per person. VOUCERS CAN NOT BE USED TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT THAT DOES NOT MEET SAFETY STANDARDS!

How to Determine If Protective Helmets and Vests for Exercise Riders Meet Safety Standards:

HELMETS

All helmets must meet one of the following product safety standards:

- ASTM International (F1163) American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM)
- BSEN 1384 European/UK
- PAS 015 (UK)
- EN 1384 (European Standard) UK
- AZ/NZ 3838 Australian and New Zealand Racing Boards

Any helmet that does not have one or more of these certification labels should be considered a non-approved helmet for riding. The helmets should be inspected to determine if the shell is intact and free of any cracks, dents, or evidence of being repaired. The interior of the helmet should be inspected to determine if the protective padding has been removed, altered or is cracked or damaged. Any helmet that has these conditions should be replaced. In addition, the chin straps should be free of any cuts and the clasp on the chin strap should be in good working condition (fully functional).
PROTECTIVE VESTS

All protective vests must meet one of the following product safety standards:

- ASTM F1937
- ASTM 2681
- EN 13158
- BETA 2009 Level 1

Any vest that does not have one or more of these certification labels should be considered non-approved for riding. Exercise riders and jockeys have been known to remove the protective padding. The inside of the vest should be inspected to ensure that the padding has not been removed or altered, or is cracked or damaged, and that it has no evidence of being repaired. Any vest that has these conditions should be replaced. In addition, the zipper closure should be in good working condition (fully functional).

There are numerous non-rated vests, including Punto and Ultra, which are being sold on line and in tack shops. **DO NOT BUY THESE VESTS!**

**VOUCHERS CAN NOT BE USED TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT THAT DOES NOT MEET CURRENT SAFETY STANDARDS!**