

CLENBUTEROL DECLARED CLASS 3 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN NEW MEXICO

On June 26, 2018, the New Mexico Board of Pharmacy, working in unison with the New Mexico Racing Commission (NMRC), officially classified the drug clenbuterol a class 3 controlled substance. The new classification can be found in the New Mexico Administrative Code section 16.19.20.67 D (3). It clearly states that clenbuterol is now a class 3 controlled substance. Horsemen found illegally in possession of the drug will now be subject to being criminally prosecuted under the Controlled Substance Act of the state of New Mexico.

The change comes as the NMRC continues to see clenbuterol findings in post race testing. Although post race clenbuterol positive numbers have declined over the last two years in New Mexico, clenbuterol continues to be found in post race samples of predominately quarter horses. The Executive Director of the NMRC, Ismael "Izzy" Trejo said, "There are still a small handful of horsemen out there that did not seem to get the memo that New Mexico has a permitted level of zero when it comes to clenbuterol. They are either extremely slow on the draw or just plain cheating."

Clenbuterol has long been a thorn in the sides of regulators in New Mexico. Levels of upwards of 30,000 picograms have been detected in post race samples of individual horses. In 2014, New Mexico saw 71 clenbuterol positives, only to see an increase to 84 in 2015. Things have since taken a turn for the better. For example there were 57 positive clenbuterol findings in 2016 and 2017 had 51 clenbuterol violations. Things certainly appear to be swinging in the right direction in New Mexico.

However, the decrease in clenbuterol violations did not dissuade the NMRC to continue to take a stiffer position against the drug. New Mexico Racing Commissioner Ken Corazza said, "Clenbuterol, when used indiscriminately, is a dangerous drug not only for the equine athlete but for the human athlete. There have been several drug overdoses from clenbuterol in humans recently and we felt maybe other jurisdictions will follow in trying to fulfill our duty to protect our horses from a drug that has long been abused by horsemen. As commissioners, we have to continue to effectively make the effort to protect the horse. Without the horse, we have no racing industry."