



**COLORADO  
EQUINE  
VETERINARY  
SERVICES**

*Quality and Concern in Equine Practice*  
Serving Colorado Springs and Southern Colorado

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**Colorado Equine  
Veterinary Services,**

*A full-service, equine  
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## Accelerating the Onset of Breeding Season

Artificial light stimulation should be considered when you would like the delivery of your new foal prior to April. Horses are naturally seasonal breeders, with an evolutionary system that allows fertile breeding to occur in the long days of the year (ie, May to September). Alteration of day length with an artificial lighting program will accelerate the onset of the first ovulation of the year in mares and, hence, allow for successful breeding earlier in the year. **Mares should be started on an artificial lighting program no later than December 1 to ensure that they are cycling normally in mid-February.**

**Colorado Equine Veterinary Services  
recommends you use one of two methods:**

**1. Expose to 16 hours of light per day:**

Use 100-200 watt incandescent light bulb after sunset in a 12' x 12' stall to extend photoperiod

Minimum of 60 days of exposure prior to the onset of breeding

Intensity of light (not the type) is the important factor; 10-15 footcandles (>107 lux)

Ensure the additional time is applied only in the evening-artificial light of similar duration is ineffective when applied prior to the time of sunrise

**2. "Pulse Lighting"-Night interruption:**

This is the more energy efficient, cost-effective way

Use timers on the lights

Expose the mares to 1 hour of light, 9.5-10.5 hours after sunset

Example; with a 5:00 pm sunset, 2:30am begin light exposure

Minimum of 60 days of exposure prior to the onset of breeding

Use 100-200 watt incandescent light bulb for a 12' x 12' stall

Intensity of light is the important factor; 10-15 footcandles (>107 lux)

Results are similar to method one

**When using either method, by the end of February 85-90% of mares will start to cycle**