



Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens: San Salvador (El Salvador), Heavy Rainfall

Floods

Western Hemisphere > El Salvador > San Salvador

10/16/2011

U.S. Embassy San Salvador released the following Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens on October 14, 2011:

The U.S. Embassy advises U.S. citizens that the Government of El Salvador has declared a national emergency due to the continuing rainfall from the tropical depression located southeast of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Mexico. The Director General of Protección Civil in El Salvador has issued a red alert for the municipality of San Francisco Menéndez and an orange alert in the coastal zone and the mountains from the department of San Miguel to Ahuachapán, which includes Ataco, Los Naranjos, Juayúa, and the area north of Sonsonate. A red alert is activated when the impact of an event is so widespread and severe that it is considered a disaster and all available resources are needed to secure and safeguard the affected population. An orange alert indicates a risk level of greater than 75% with a high possibility of serious injuries requiring responses from search and rescue groups.

The weather forecast calls for continuing moderate to strong rains over the weekend and into next week which could result in small landslides in steep areas. Protección Civil reports more than 4,300 people have been affected by the tropical storm, including 4 injuries and 1 missing person. Local newspapers have reported 5 deaths from the storm, but that information has not been announced by official sources. In addition, roads and bridges have been damaged or destroyed and power and phone lines are down in some parts of the country. Some towns remain cut off from outside contact.

The Embassy advises all American citizens in El Salvador to closely monitor radio and television broadcasts and Salvadoran Government websites such as Protección Civil and Government Weather Information for information on weather developments in your immediate area. Inform family and friends of your whereabouts and remain in close contact with your tour operator, hotel staff, and local officials for instructions especially if conditions continue to worsen. Be prepared by organizing a kit in a waterproof container that includes a supply of bottled water, non-perishable food items, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, and vital documents (especially passport and other identification). Should it become necessary, emergency shelters often provide only very basic resources and may have limited medical



and food supplies.

We strongly encourage U.S. citizens to enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). By enrolling, you will receive the Embassy's most recent security and safety updates during your trip. Enrollment also ensures that you can be reached during an emergency. While we will do our utmost to assist you in a crisis, be aware that local authorities bear primary responsibility for the welfare of people living or traveling in their jurisdictions.

Additional information on hurricanes and storm preparedness can be found on the Department's Hurricane & Typhoon Season 2011 webpage. You can stay in touch and get Embassy updates by checking the U.S. Embassy San Salvador web site. You can also stay up to date by bookmarking our Bureau of Consular Affairs website, which contains the current Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts as well as the Worldwide Caution. Follow us on Twitter and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on Facebook as well. If you don't have internet access, current information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States, or for callers from other countries, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Embassy in San Salvador is located at Final Boulevard Santa Elena Sur, Urbanización Santa Elena, Antiguo Cuscatlan, La Libertad, telephone 011-503-2501-2999, fax 011-503-2278-5522, email congansal@state.gov.

The Consular Section is open for American Citizen Services from 8:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. weekdays, excluding U.S. and Salvadoran holidays. After business hours, the Embassy can be contacted by telephone at 011-503-2501-2316 or 011-503-2501-2253.