



## Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens: Inclement Winter Weather, Albania

Winter weather

Europe > Albania > Tirana

2/8/2012

The U.S. Embassy in Tirana informs U.S. citizens residing in or visiting Albania of continuing severe winter weather conditions in northern, southern, and southeastern regions of the country. U.S. citizens should monitor local and international weather reports and follow the instructions of local officials.

According to press reports, recent heavy snowfall has blocked several roads and bridges in Albania, including in the areas Shkodër, Malësi e Madhe, Tropojë, Pukë, Dibër, Kukës, Korçë, Elbasan, Gjirokastrë, Vlorë, and other locations. Outlying areas of Tirana may be impacted by snowfall but the city of Tirana proper remains unaffected at this time. There are reports that regular supply and access routes to some villages and communes in these regions are impassable. Several other villages and communes may only be accessible with vehicles equipped with snow chains. Some public schools have been closed temporarily. Road conditions are hazardous with some roads covered in snow or ice.

The Embassy advises U.S. citizens to follow the instructions of local officials and local traffic police. Albania's Institute of Meteorology has predicted worsening weather conditions through February 9. However, winter weather conditions can change suddenly and unpredictably, and we urge U.S. citizens to monitor local weather reports closely.

If driving overland in Albania, please exercise extreme caution, paying particular attention to:

- The conditions on the roadway itself;
- Snowdrifts coming from the hillside above the road; and
- Oncoming or passing traffic driving too fast or irresponsibly, given road conditions.

U.S. citizens should carry their travel documents at all times (e.g., U.S. passport, birth certificate, picture IDs, etc.) or secure them in a safe, waterproof location. We also suggest that U.S. citizens contact friends and family with updates about their whereabouts. If U.S. citizens find themselves in an emergency situation, they may contact the Albanian State Police by dialing 129 or 126 (the Albanian 911 equivalents).



You can stay in touch and get Embassy updates by checking the U.S. Embassy Tirana website. You can also get global updates at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs website, where you can find the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information. If you don't have Internet access, we have a call center for updates. You can call 1-888-407-4747, which is toll-free in the U.S. and Canada, or 1-202-501-4444, a regular toll line which is available outside the U.S. and Canada.

We encourage U.S. citizens living or traveling in Albania to register with the U.S. Embassy in Tirana through the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to obtain updated information on travel and security within Albania. By registering, U.S. citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly at the U.S. Embassy in Tirana.