



## Security Message for U.S. Citizens: Baghdad (Iraq), Planning for Possible Collapse of Mosul Dam

Floods

Near East > Iraq

2/29/2016

The disruption of maintenance operations in 2014 increased the risk of the Mosul Dam collapsing. The Government of Iraq (GOI) is preparing to initiate emergency maintenance operations to reduce the risk of failure.

A dam failure would cause significant flooding and interruption of essential services in low-lying areas along the Tigris River Valley from Mosul to Baghdad. Some models estimate that Mosul could be inundated by as much as 70 feet (21 meters) of water within hours of the breach. Downriver cities such as Tikrit, Samarra, and Baghdad could be inundated with smaller, but still significant levels of flooding within 24-72 hours of the breach.

We have no specific information that indicates when a breach might occur, but out of an abundance of caution, we would like to underscore that prompt evacuation offers the most effective tool to save lives of the hundreds of thousands of people living in the most dangerous part of the flood path in the event of a breach. Proper preparation could save many lives.

The Embassy would be extremely limited in its ability to assist in the event of a crisis. Therefore, the Embassy recommends that U.S. citizens in Iraq, especially those who reside in the floodplain of the Tigris River, do the following:

**Prepare your own contingency plans.** Detailed guidance on developing a personal contingency plan may be found on the Department's website on natural disasters.

**Update your documents.** Lack of vital records and travel documents, such as birth certificates, passports or visas, will hamper the Embassy's ability to assist in an emergency situation. We encourage U.S. citizens and their family members to apply now for the proper

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travel document and/or Consular Report of Birth Abroad. See Embassy Baghdad's website for more information.

**Enroll in STEP** to receive security messages from the Embassy, and improve State's ability to assist you in a crisis.

**Stay informed** of local media reports and GOI warnings, which are available on the Embassy's website.

While it is impossible to accurately predict the likelihood of the dam failing, the Embassy has made contingency plans to relocate its personnel in such an event.

**For further information:**

- See the State Department's travel website for the Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and ***Iraq Country Specific Information***.
- Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (**STEP**) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Contact the U.S. Embassy in Iraq, located on Al-Kindi Street, International Zone, Baghdad, at 0770 443-1286 (+964 770-443-1286 from outside Iraq) 24 hours a day to report an emergency, and 0760-030-4400 (+964 760-030-4400) for pre-recorded information regarding services for U.S. citizens.
- Call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).
- Follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

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