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## American Citizen Services Newsletter July 2010

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### **SAFETY AND SECURITY SITUATION**

We reiterate the State Department's Country Specific Information on Macedonia: The security situation in Macedonia is stable, although occasional criminal violence does occur. U.S. citizens should avoid areas with demonstrations, strikes, or roadblocks where large crowds are gathered, particularly those involving political causes or striking workers. Crime in Macedonia is low by U.S. standards, and violent crime against U.S. citizens is rare. Pick-pocketing, theft, and other petty street crimes do occur, however, particularly in areas where tourists and foreigners congregate. U.S. citizens are advised to take the same precautions against becoming crime victims as they would in any U.S. city. Valuables, including cell phones and electronic items, should not be left in plain view in unattended vehicles. Windows and doors should be securely locked when residences are not occupied. Organized crime is present in Macedonia; organized criminal activity occasionally results in violent confrontations between members of rival organizations. ATM use is generally safe; however, travelers should take standard safety precautions.

The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. If you are a victim of a crime while overseas, in addition to reporting to the local police, please contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for assistance. The Embassy/Consulate staff can, for example, assist you to find appropriate medical care, to contact family members or friends, and explain how funds could be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and find an attorney if needed.

The Worldwide Caution issued for U.S. citizens abroad by the U.S. Department of State regarding the threat of terrorist acts has been updated as of February 12, 2010. For the latest security information, U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where up-to-date [Worldwide Caution Public Announcements](#), [Travel Warnings and Public Announcements](#) can be found.

## **KOSOVO DEMONSTRATION NOTICES**

Starting July 1, 2010, the American Citizens Services unit will no longer issue warden messages regarding routine demonstrations taking place in Kosovo. Instead, information about routine demonstrations will be posted on [U.S. Embassy Pristina's website](#), under the heading "Demonstration Notices."

Please monitor the [website](#) regularly for information about demonstration activities in the country. We will send an email alert when a new demonstration notice has been posted. Please note that the Embassy will continue to issue warden messages not relating to demonstrations through the regular method.

We encourage U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the [State Department's travel registration website](#). [U.S. Embassy Pristina](#) is located at 30 Nazim Hikmet St. in the Arberia/Dragodan area of Pristina. The telephone number is (381) 38-5959-3000. You may also contact the consular section of U.S. Embassy Pristina via [e-mail](#). At this time U.S. Embassy Pristina provides only emergency services to American citizens. U.S. Embassy Skopje, Macedonia, provides all routine consular services such as passport and visa processing. [U.S. Embassy Skopje](#) is located at Samoilova 21, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia. The Embassy can also be reached via telephone (389) (2) 310-2000, and via the consular section's [e-mail](#).

## **UPCOMING HOLIDAYS**

The Embassy will be closed for the following holidays:

- Ilinden Uprising Day – Monday, August 2
- Labor Day –Monday, September 6,
- Independence Day – Wednesday, September 8
- Ramadan Bajram – September 9, Thursday

## **ENSURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS-JULY AND AUGUST STATE PRIMARIES AROUND THE CORNER**

The following States will hold Primary Elections during the months of July, and August 2010 on the dates indicated:

- July 20, 2010: Georgia
- July 27, 2010: Oklahoma
- August 3, 2010: Kansas, Michigan, Missouri

- August 5, 2010: Tennessee August 10, 2010: Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota
- August 17, 2010: Washington, Wyoming
- August 24, 2010: Alaska, Arizona, Florida, Vermont
- August 28, 2010: Louisiana (1st Party Congressional)

### **Register and Request Your Absentee Ballot Now**

Anyone who has not yet submitted a registration and ballot request (FPCA) for the 2010 calendar year should do so as soon as possible. The FPCA ballot application and instructions are available at [www.fvap.gov/FPCA](http://www.fvap.gov/FPCA). Click on your State on the map and follow the instructions to register and request an absentee ballot. Some States allow submitting the FPCA by fax or email in addition to regular mail.

For more information, please visit the following website and click on the news release for your state:

<http://www.fvap.gov/global/news/index.html>

### **REDESIGN OF TRAVEL.STATE.GOV**

On May 25, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs unveiled a new design of <http://travel.state.gov> that is easier to navigate and more user-friendly. Travel.state.gov is the State Department's preeminent tool for reaching out to the American public about travel safety in other countries, and for you to report your travel plans so that Embassies and Consulates around the world can serve you better. Check out the website's new look today! <http://travel.state.gov/>

### **NEW NONIMMIGRANT VISA FEES**

Nonimmigrant visa application processing fees increased as of June 4, 2010.

The U.S. Department of State is increasing fees to ensure sufficient resources to cover the rising cost of processing nonimmigrant visas. The new, tiered fee structure was created to cover the higher costs for processing certain categories of nonimmigrant visas that are more complicated and require more in-depth consideration than most other categories of nonimmigrant visas. For a number of reasons, including new security enhancements, the \$131 fee set on January 1, 2008 no longer covers the current, actual cost of processing nonimmigrant visas.

Under the new schedule of fees, applicants for all visas that are not petition-based, including B1/B2 tourist and business visitor visas and all student and exchange visitor (F, M and J) visas, will pay a fee of \$140.

Applicants for petition-based visas will pay a higher application fee. For more information, please see our website.

Information about the fee increase may be found on the Department of State's Internet site, (<http://travel.state.gov>), on the Fees for Visa Services webpage, and also on U.S. Embassy Skopje's website (<http://macedonia.usembassy.gov>). Only the fees for nonimmigrant visas changed on June 4, 2010.

### **NEW AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES FEES**

Effective July 13, 2010 the Consular section will start implementing the new schedule of fees for different services provided for American Citizens. The increase in the fees is based on a Cost of Service Study completed by the Bureau of Consular Affairs in June of 2009. Listed are the new fees for the most common American Citizens Consular Services:

Additional passport pages-	\$82.00
Notary service per signature-	\$50.00
Adult passport card-	\$70.00
Minor passport card-	\$60.00
Adult initial passport application-	\$135.00
Adult passport renewal application-	\$110.00
Minor initial/renewal passport application-	\$105.00
Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) -	\$100.00

Full list of the new fees for the services provided for American citizens will be available at the Embassy web page.

### **SUMMER HINTS FOR EASIER PASSPORT SERVICES**

- Check your passport's expiration date. Some countries in the region require that a U.S. passport be valid for at least six months for visa issuance or visa-free entry. For further details about visa and entry and exit requirements of countries in the region please go to the [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) website or check with the airline or your travel agent.

- Review your children's passports. Check the expiration date of their passport – remember that passports for children under 16 are only valid for 5 years.

- Make an appointment early for passport services. All non-emergency consular services require an appointment. You can make an appointment online through our website: <http://macedonia.usembassy.gov>. It typically takes 7- 10 working days from the time you apply to receive a full validity passport. There is a high level of demand for appointment slots in the days and weeks before a holiday and during the summer school holiday.

### **IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

In light of the recent earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, the State Department strongly encourages American citizens living or planning travel abroad to register your travel with the Department of State. Registration makes it possible to contact you if necessary, whether because of a family emergency in the United States or because of a crisis where you are visiting. Registration is a free service provided by the State Department, and is easily accomplished online at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>.

Note that, in accordance with the Privacy Act, the Department of State may not release your information without your express written authorization. You should also fill out the emergency contact information section in your passport. If something happens to you overseas, your passport is the first place local authorities will look to find someone to notify. Write the information in pencil if you think you may need to change it in the future. We also advise leaving a detailed itinerary and copies of your passport biographical-data page with a friend or relative in the United States. For more information, please visit: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips\\_1232.html#residing](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#residing)

## **MEDICAL COVERAGE ABROAD**

The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. If necessary, Americans should consider secondary medical coverage for the trip.

- The Social Security Medicare Program does not provide coverage for hospital or medical costs outside the United States of America.
- Many health insurance plans do not provide coverage overseas. Those that provide "customary and reasonable" hospital costs abroad may not pay for your medical evacuation back to the United States which can easily cost \$10,000.00 and up depending on your location and medical condition.
- Many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service.
- Uninsured patients may be refused service.
- Countries with socialized medicine may not provide full services to non-residents.
- Payment of hospital and other expenses abroad is the responsibility of the traveler.
- Some countries require tourists to carry accident or travel insurance. For detailed information on country specific information, please visit [Country Information Sheet](#).

## **TREASURY DEPARTMENT UNVEILS NEW DESIGN FOR U.S. \$100 BILL**

Officials from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the United States Secret Service on April 21 unveiled the new design for the \$100 note. Complete with advanced technology to combat counterfeiting, the new design for the \$100 note retains the traditional look of U.S. currency. "When the new design \$100 note is issued, the approximately 6.5 billion older design \$100s already in circulation will remain legal tender," said Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board Ben S. Bernanke. "U.S.

currency users should know they will not have to trade in their older design \$100 notes when the new ones begin circulating." For more information, including a video, please visit the following links:

[http://www.newmoney.gov/media/release\\_04212010.htm](http://www.newmoney.gov/media/release_04212010.htm)

<http://www.newmoney.gov/newmoney/Splashpage.aspx>

## **TICK SEASON IN THE BALKANS**

Springtime is Tick Season in the Balkans. Ticks can be troublesome and, at times, a health risk. Here are tips from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) on: 1) how to avoid exposure to ticks and 2) how to remove ticks that may become attached to your body.

**The following link provides information on tick avoidance and Lyme's disease and is relevant to all the tick borne illnesses prevalent in the Balkans.**

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dybid/lyme/Prevention/ld\\_Prevention\\_Avoid.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dybid/lyme/Prevention/ld_Prevention_Avoid.htm)

Ticks prefer wooded and bushy areas with high grass and a lot of leaf litter. If you do enter a tick area, walk in the center of the trail to avoid contact with overgrown grass, brush, and leaf litter. Wear a hat, long pants, long sleeves, and long socks to keep ticks off your skin. Light-colored clothing will help you spot ticks more easily. Tucking your pant legs into socks or boots and tucking shirts into pants help keep ticks on the outside of clothing. If you'll be outside for an extended period of time, tape the area where your pants and socks meet to prevent ticks from crawling under your clothes.

Remember to check pets regularly as they can bring ticks into the home.

### **Keep Ticks off Your Skin**

In addition to the clothing suggestions above, there are several insect repellent products on the market and yet another line of defense. You should use insect repellent with 20% - 30% DEET on adult skin and clothing to prevent a tick bite. You can find effective repellents in drug, grocery and discount stores in the USA. [For details about the proper use of repellents visit our West Nile Virus website.](#)

### **Please remember to pick up these repellents when you return to the USA on R and R.**

Permethrin is another type of insect repellent. It can be purchased at outdoor equipment stores that carry camping or hunting gear. Permethrin kills ticks on contact! One application to pants, socks, and shoes typically stays effective through several washings. Permethrin should not be applied directly to skin. [For details on Permethrin visit the National Pesticide Information Center.](#)

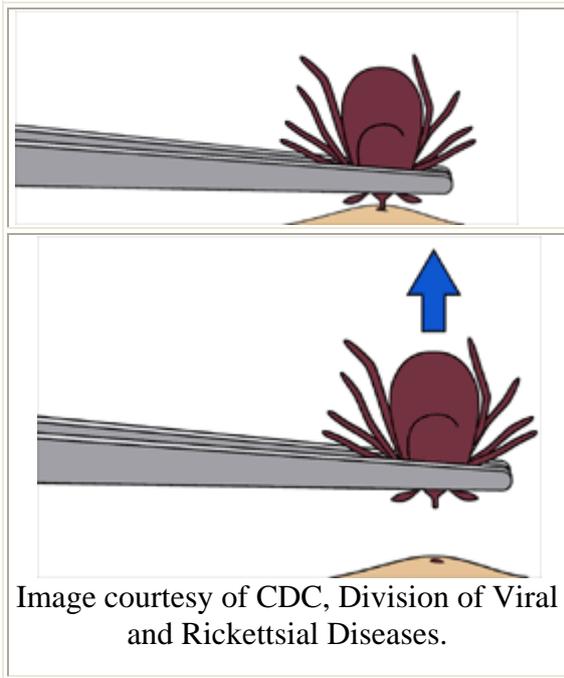
### **Check Your Skin and Clothes for Ticks Every Day!**

Remove any ticks from your clothes before you enter your home – don't forget to check your pet also. To kill ticks that you may have missed, wash your clothes with hot water and dry them using high heat for at least one hour.

Perform daily tick checks after being outdoors, even in your own yard. Inspect all parts of your body carefully including your armpits, scalp, and groin. [Remove ticks immediately using fine-tipped tweezers.](#)

If a tick is attached to your skin for less than 24 hours, your chance of getting a disease is extremely small. But just to be safe, monitor your health closely after a tick bite and be alert for any [signs and symptoms of tick-borne illness.](#)

Tick Removal Method:



Remove a tick from your skin as soon as you notice it. Use fine-tipped tweezers to firmly grasp the tick very close to your skin. With a steady motion, pull the tick's body away from your skin. Then clean your skin with soap and warm water. Throw the dead tick away with your household trash.

Avoid crushing the tick's body. Do not be alarmed if the tick's mouthparts remain in the skin. Once the mouthparts are removed from the rest of the tick, it can no longer transmit the Lyme disease bacteria. If you accidentally crush the tick, clean your skin with soap and warm water or alcohol.

Don't use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish, or other products to remove a tick.



This newsletter is an unofficial and informal source of practical information for U.S. citizens residing in Macedonia. If you have comments, questions, or suggestions, please contact the Consular Section at (02) 310-2000, or at [consularskopje@state.gov](mailto:consularskopje@state.gov). This newsletter is also available on the American Citizens Services page of our website at <http://macedonia.usembassy.gov>