

Message for U.S. Citizens
Holiday Security Precautions
2 December 2015

As the holiday season approaches, the American community should be aware of the probability of increased crime in Asuncion. Historically, crime has increased in the weeks leading up to the holidays. Extra vigilance over the next several weeks is strongly advised.

Please review your personal security with all your family members and follow the tips below for keeping safe during the holiday season.

Residential Security

Please ensure that you have instructed your family members and employees on the proper use and importance of residential security measures.

- Keep all entry points to your residence locked at all times. All door locks should be engaged.
- If you have an alarm, use it.
- Strictly limit the number of people who know of your intention to leave your residence vacant overnight.

Around Town

Shopping centers and business districts are prime locations for property crime. Criminals seek out victims who appear distracted or who are carrying so many items that they cannot effectively safeguard their valuables. Shoppers are especially vulnerable when loading goods into their cars.

- When shopping, carry only as many bags as you can comfortably control. Ensure that nothing can be easily snatched from your grasp. Your wallet, keys and cell phone should be in a secure location, and you should be especially wary of pickpockets.
- Criminals often work in teams in order to divert a victim's attention. Be wary of anyone who attempts to draw your attention away from your belongings and surroundings.
- While shopping, do not take bags to your car in order to make a second trip for shopping.
- Don't leave anything of value exposed in your vehicle.
- Always drive with your windows up and doors locked, especially in city traffic.

On the Roads

The holiday season normally sees a marked increase in road accidents, some of which result in fatalities. Seasonal stress, the presence of out-of-town drivers, and an increase in alcohol consumption all contribute to this increase.

Your chances of surviving a vehicle accident increase when you wear your seat belt. Small children's chances for survival likewise increase when they are secured in size-appropriate safety seats properly mounted in the rear of your vehicle.

Carry your cell phone with you whenever you are traveling by car, no matter how short the journey. In the event of an accident, your cell phone is your lifeline to emergency medical assistance and security support.

The Embassy urges U.S. Citizens to take extra precautions throughout the holiday season in Paraguay.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Paraguay enroll in the [State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Regularly monitor the State Department's [website](#), where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the [Country Specific Information for Paraguay](#). For additional information, refer to the [Traveler's Checklist](#) on the State Department's website.

Contact the [U.S. Embassy](#) or consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call [1-888-407-4747](#) toll-free from within the United States and Canada, or [1-202-501-4444](#) from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and download our free Smart Traveler App, available through [iTunes](#) and the [Android market](#), to have travel information at your fingertips.

The U.S. Embassy in Asuncion is located at 1776 Mariscal Lopez Avenue.

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