

**U.S. Embassy Quito, Ecuador**  
**Security Message for U.S. Citizens**

**Evacuation of Areas Around Latacunga and Closure of Latacunga Airport**

**August 15, 2015**

The U.S. Embassy in Quito would like to inform U.S. citizens throughout Ecuador that the Ecuadorian Government, which on August 14 raised the [volcanic activity alert level](#) due to activity in the Cotopaxi Volcano, has now closed the Latacunga airport, and ordered a precautionary evacuation of low-lying areas around Latacunga. Current evacuation orders include the zones of Rio Pita, Mejia Pedregal, Valle de los Chillos, and Rio Santa Clara in the northern zone of Latacunga, as well as Rio Cutuchi and Mulalo Lasso in the southern zone. The closure of Cotopaxi National Park and numerous other areas considered to be at risk remains in force.

The area in and around the city of Latacunga is particularly vulnerable to the danger of mudslides, as are other low-lying areas that can extend significant distances from the Volcano. The town of Latacunga is directly in the path of potential mud or lava flow from the Cotopaxi Volcano and people in or near Cotopaxi must remain aware that the even small emissions from the volcano can cause serious or fatal injuries or trigger avalanches and landslides.

Areas of risk and up-to-date information on the status of Cotopaxi can be found at the Government of Ecuador's Secretariat of Emergency Management (SGR) at <http://www.gestionderiesgos.gob.ec/>, and via Twitter at [https://mobile.twitter.com/Riesgos\\_Ec](https://mobile.twitter.com/Riesgos_Ec), as well as from the Instituto Geofisico at <https://www.facebook.com/instituto.geofisico/posts/465639433616015>, and via Twitter at <https://mobile.twitter.com/IGecuador>.

Some commercial flights in and out of Quito International Airport have been cancelled as well, and travelers are advised to confirm flight status with their airlines before attempting to travel.

U.S. citizens residing in or planning travel to areas affected by Cotopaxi volcano are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with central and local government evacuation plans in the event of a major eruption or further upgrade in the volcano activity alert level. Additionally, U.S. citizens should review their personal safety plans and ensure they have adequate emergency supplies, including face masks, food, and water.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Ecuador enroll in the Department of State's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#). 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 Ecuador](#). For additional information, please refer to our "[Traveler's Checklist](#)" page. Updated information on travel and security in Ecuador may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States or by calling 1-202-501-4444 outside the United States.

### **Contact information:**

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Dialing instructions within Ecuador:

- Within the same city and from a land line use the last seven digits.
- For calls from a mobile phone and for intercity telephone calls add the city code preceded by a 0.

Dialing instructions from the United States:

- Add the 011 prefix for an international long distance line.

For after-hours emergencies, call the phone numbers listed above for assistance.