Warden Message: U.S. Embassy, Quito, Ecuador

Immediate Tsunami Warning

March 11, 2011

Dear Warden and/or Registrant:

A massive magnitude 8.9 earthquake rocked the Japan coast on Friday, triggering tsunami warnings for twenty countries, including the coast of Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands. NOAA alerts indicate that the tsunami could reach Ecuador late afternoon to early evening on Friday. Action should be taken to protect life and property. A tsunami is a series of long ocean waves. Each individual wave crest can last 5 to 15 minutes or more and extensively flood coastal areas. The danger can continue for many hours after the initial wave as subsequent waves arrive. Tsunami wave heights cannot be predicted and the first wave may not be the largest. All shores are at risk no matter which direction they face. The Galapagos Islands may be especially vulnerable to large waves. Extremely strong and unusual currents can accompany a tsunami. Debris picked up and carried by a tsunami amplifies its destructive power. Simultaneous high tides or high surge can significantly increase the tsunami hazard. Press reports note that President Correa has declared a state of exception/emergency and the coastal region may be subject to evacuation today.

Americans living near or visiting the coastal areas of Ecuador and the Galapagos islands should monitor tsumani warnings on http://www.prh.noaa.gov/ptwc/ and www.cnn.com, as well as local news sources.

Americans living or traveling in Ecuador are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration website, https://travelregistration.state.gov, and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Ecuador. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. Please see the following links for local warden message information in Quito and Guayaquil, respectively, http://ecuador.usembassy.gov and http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov.

U.S. citizens should consult the Country Specific Information for Ecuador and the latest Travel Alerts and Warnings and Worldwide Caution at the Department's web site at http://travel.state.gov. 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.

The U.S. Embassy in Quito is located at Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro. The telephone during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) is (011) 593 2 398 5000 X3800. Within the same city use the last seven digits. Add the city code for intercity telephone calls. See also the Embassy web site at http://ecuador.usembassy.gov. American Citizen walk-in hours are between 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Thursday, excluding U.S. and Ecuadorian holidays.

The U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil is located at the corner of Avenida 9 de Octubre and Garcia Moreno (near the Hotel Oro Verde); telephone (011-593-4) 232-3570 during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) or 232-1152 for after-hours emergencies; fax (011-593-4) 232-0904. See the Consulate General web site at http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov.