



Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

Issue 11

October, 2008

THE ELECTION IS UPON US

This newsletter is published by the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit, U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai. If there are any particular topics you are interested in, please contact ACS at: ShanghaiACS@state.gov.

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The following explains the three possible scenarios citizens face within days of the elections:

Scenario 1 - I have my ballot

The citizen has received the state ballot: Vote and return it immediately! When mailing the voted ballot, the citizen should ask the mail clerk to hand stamp the ballot envelope so that a date is clearly visible. The dated postmark will help ensure that the Local Election Official can make a proper determination of timely mailing.

Many states that allow late counting of ballots require the ballot envelope has been mailed on or before Election Day. In addition, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) recommends that the citizens always vote and return their regular state absentee ballot, regardless of the day it is received, as long as it is mailed by Election Day.

Scenario 2 - I do not have my ballot

The citizen has not received the requested ballot: If the citizen is a Uniformed Service voter or overseas and has requested the absentee ballot, but has not received the regular state ballot, the citizen may be qualified to use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB). The citizen should obtain a FWAB now, vote it, fax it (if allowed by the state) and mail it immediately! The citizen can obtain the FWAB from the Voting Assistance Officer (VAO), at a US Embassy or Consulate or American organization overseas such as Democrats Abroad or Republicans Abroad.

Important note: If the citizen receives the state absentee ballot after submitting the FWAB, he or she should vote and return the state ballot up to and including Election Day.

The citizen should contact the Consulate's Voting Assistance Officer (VAO) at voteShanghai@state.gov to determine registration status and what options are provided by the state or county **(Continued on Page 4)**

Upcoming Holidays and Other Closures

Special points of interest:

- * Melamine in Food Products Manufactured in China
- * Tips To Get PRC Visas In Hong Kong

Please remember that the days just before and just after a holiday are often extremely busy and you can expect significantly longer waiting times. If you visit

us outside of these times, you should have a shorter wait.

The American Citizen Services Unit will be **CLOSED** all day on the following days:

November 11, Tues.
Veterans' Day

November 27, Thur.
Thanksgiving Day

REMINDERS FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTION

Late Counting

The following states allow extended counting of absentee ballots for the November 4, 2008 general election: Alaska, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virgin Islands, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. All require the ballot to be voted and mailed no later than the day of the election. Visit www.fvap.gov for State-by-State specific requirements.

The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) should be used if the requested state absentee ballot has not arrived in time to allow the voter to

return it by the state deadline for counting. If the voter has yet to receive his or her state absentee ballot have them fill out and mail in the FWAB now. However, Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) recommends that citizens always vote and return their regular state absentee ballot, regardless of when they receive it up to and including Election Day.

Postmark

When mailing your voted ballot, please ask the mail clerk to hand stamp the ballot envelope so that a date is clearly visible. The dated postmark will help ensure that the Local Election Official can make a proper determination of timely mailing. Generally, if a state

allows late counting of ballots, the ballot envelope must have been mailed on or before Election Day. Refer to the State-by-State Instructions at www.fvap.gov to determine if your state requires the voted ballot to be postmarked.

Affidavit, Notary or Witness

The following states require an affidavit, notary or witness on the ballot return envelope for both the state issued ballot and the FWAB: Alabama, Alaska, Guam Louisiana, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Virginia and Wisconsin.

Voters who have questions regarding absentee voting can send an e-mail to VoteShanghai@state.gov or refer to <http://www.fvap.gov/>.

Mailing Options for Voting Materials

Voters in the Shanghai Consular District (Shanghai and the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Anhui) have a number of options for mailing Federal Postcard Applications (FPCAs), voted state ballots, and/or Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots to their local election officials in the U.S.

"Express Your Vote" and Other Courier Options: The Overseas Vote Foundation and FedEx have partnered to offer voters in Shanghai express mailing of ballots **at no charge** through the "Express Your Vote" program. All states and territories **except Alabama** have agreed to accept ballots via the "Express Your Vote" Program. Voters using

this method should logon to the Overseas Vote Foundation Website and print out a customized FedEx Airway Bill or label. Approved drop-off locations for the "Express Your Vote" program are listed below. These locations will have hardcopy Airway Bills available onsite to be completed in person, but we strongly encourage voters using the Express Your Vote program to print the Airway Bill from the website to ensure it is complete and correct. Be sure to set your printer to landscape to ensure that all of the necessary data prints. Voters residing outside of Shanghai can also take advantage of the program if they can get

their ballots to the Consulate. The "Express Your Vote" URL is:

www.overseasvotefoundation.org/overseas/ExpressYourVote

Other express couriers will also mail ballots, for a fee.

UPS: www.ups.com (800-820-8388 or 400-820-8388)

DHL: www.dhl.com (800-810-8000 or 400-810-8000)

Express couriers generally do not deliver to PO boxes, so you will need to know the street address of your local voting office. The OverseasVoteFoundation.org website has detailed address information, including express mail addresses and phone numbers for local voting officials.

(Continued on Page 3)

Mailing Options for Voting Materials

(From Page 2)

China Post: Mailing your FPCAs or voted ballot to the United States through China Post requires appropriate international postage and takes approximately 10 days to reach the United States so please plan ahead. Mailing addresses for local election officials and state mailing deadlines can be found in the Voting Assistance Guide, available on-line at www.fvap.gov.

US Postal Service via the Consulate: Voters may also choose to return their FPCAs and ballots to the Consulate for mailing via US Postal Service first class mail free of charge. Alabama voters and those who return their ballots early enough could use this method without completing the FedEx Airway Bill. Consulate USPS mail averages 10 days to reach U.S. destinations so please plan ahead.

“Express Your Vote”

Shanghai FedEx Drop-off Locations

US Consulate American Citizen Services Center, 1038 West Nanjing Road 8th F 美国驻沪总领事馆, 南京西路1038号梅龙镇广场8楼 *Hours: Mornings 8 - 11:30, Afternoons 1:30 - 3:30, closed Tuesday afternoons*

FedEx Xuhui Station, No. 28, Lane 411, Shi Long Rd., Xuhui District 徐汇区石龙路411弄28号 *Hours: 10:00 - 22:00 (Mon - Fri), 10:00 - 18:00 (Sat)*

FedEx Changning Station, D3, No. 291, Sui Ning Rd., Changning District 长宁区绥宁路291号D3 *Hours: 10:00 - 22:00 (Mon - Fri), 10:00 - 18:00 (Sat)*

FedEx Zhabei Station, No. 39, Lane 709, Lin Shi Rd., Zhabei District 闸北区灵石路709号39号 *Hours: 10:00 - 22:00 (Mon - Fri), 10:00 - 18:00 (Sat)*

FedEx Jinqiao Station, No.615, Xin Jin Qiao Rd., Pudong 浦东新金桥路615 *Hours: 10:00 - 22:00 (Mon - Fri), 10:00 - 18:00 (Sat)*

FedEx Pudong Airport Gateway, Warehouse E, Int'l Express Center, No. 600 Hai Tian Wu Rd., Shanghai Pudong Int'l Airport 浦东国际机场海天五路600号国际快件中心E库 *Hours: 9:00 - 24:00 (Mon - Sat)*

*Please note that many FedEx outlets in Shanghai will **not** participate in the “Express Your Vote” program.*

State Ballot Return Deadlines

Below is a list of General Election Deadlines for Overseas Citizens and Military stationed in the U.S. and abroad. States appearing twice on the list are indicated with an asterisk. Please also be aware of states with postmark deadlines.

November 3rd: Mississippi*, Overseas Citizens and Stateside Military, 5pm North Carolina, 5pm

November 4th: Alabama, 12pm; American Samoa, 1:30pm; Arizona, 7pm; Colorado, 7pm; Connecticut, COP; Delaware, 8pm; Florida*, Stateside Military, 7pm; Guam, 8pm; Hawaii, COP; Idaho, 8pm; Indiana, COP; Kentucky, COP; Louisiana; Maine, 8pm; Massachusetts*, Stateside Military, 8pm; Michigan, 8pm; Minnesota, COP; Mississippi*, Overseas Military, 7pm; Missouri, 7pm; Montana, 8pm; Nebraska, COP; Nevada, 7pm; New Hampshire, 5pm; New Jersey, COP; New Mexico, COP; Ohio*, Stateside Military, COP; Oklahoma, 7pm; Puerto Rico, 3pm; Rhode Island, 9pm; South Carolina, COP; South Dakota, COP; Tennessee, COP; Texas*, Stateside Military, COP; Virginia, 7pm; West Virginia; Wisconsin*, Overseas Citizens, COP; Wyoming, COP

November 7th: Georgia, postmarked by Nov. 4; North Dakota

November 10th: Iowa, 12pm, postmarked by Nov. 3; Texas*, Overseas Citizens and Stateside Military, in delivery by Nov. 4

November 11th: New York*, Overseas Citizens, postmarked by Nov. 3 Pennsylvania, postmarked by Nov. 3

November 14th: Alaska*, Stateside Military; Arkansas, 5pm; District of Columbia; Florida*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military, 7pm Ohio*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military Virgin Islands Wisconsin*, Military, 5pm, postmarked by Nov. 4 Massachusetts*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military, postmarked Nov. 4

November 17th: New York*, Military, postmarked by Nov. 3

November 18th: Illinois, postmarked by Nov. 3; Utah, 12pm, postmarked by Nov. 3

November 19th: Alaska*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military

November 25th: Washington, oath signed/dated by Nov. 4

Note - "COP" stands for "Close Of Polls"

Scenario 3 — I have not registered yet

(From Page 1) according to the Voter Assistance Guide and information obtained from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website. Additionally for many states, the citizen can check his or her registration status online at fvap.gov/reference/links/index.html.

Scenario 3 - I have not registered yet

The citizen has not regis-

tered or requested an absentee ballot: In some states there may still be time for action. The citizen should contact the Voting Assistance Officer (VAO) to determine, using the Voting Assistance Guide (VAG) and the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website, if the registration is still open and



what methods the state allows for expediting Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and ballot delivery.

The citizen should obtain and complete an FPCA, fax or email it (if state/county allows), and mail the hardcopy immediately to the Local Election Official. If the state/county allows faxing and or emailing the blank and the voted ballot, the citizen should request it on the FPCA and provide email and fax numbers as required.

Post-Election Survey Headed Your Way

Each Presidential election year, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) conducts surveys to determine voter participation in the electoral process and to evaluate our program. This survey is not the same as the Election Day survey conducted by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

There are six populations that make up the FVAP Post-Election Survey. These include the following: Uniformed Services members, Fed-

eral civilians overseas, non-Federal overseas citizens, Unit Voting Assistance Officers, Department of State Voting Assistance Officers and U.S. local election officials will receive surveys during the week of November 2, 2008.

If you receive one of these surveys in the mail, we encourage you to take a few minutes and fill out either the paper questionnaire or respond via the Internet. Instructions for Internet response will be provided in

the survey package.

Your participation in this survey can play a very important part in improving the absentee voting process for Uniformed Service members and U.S. citizens overseas. We ask that you fill out and return the survey as soon as you receive it. If you have any questions or need any assistance regarding the survey, please contact vote@fvap.ncr.gov. The FVAP thanks you in advance for your participation.

Leaving Shanghai Consular District?

If you are departing from Shanghai consular district after a long stay here, and you formally registered your stay with the U.S. consulate, please be sure to "cancel" your registration when you leave.

You can deregister yourself by visiting the travelregistration.state.gov site if you were previously registered through this site.

If you previously submitted your registration at the U.S. consulate, you may deregister

yourself by sending an email request to ShanghaiACS@state.gov.



Melamine in Food Products Manufactured in China

News reports and the World Health Organization (WHO) state that tens of thousands of infants in China who consumed infant formula contaminated with melamine are suffering from urinary tract stones, kidney damage, and kidney failure. For more information visit the [Food and Drug Administration website](#).

What should I do if I believe I or my child may already have been exposed to melamine, for example, during travel to China?

See a doctor right away if you or your infant has any of the following symptoms: stomach pain; vomiting; fever; irritability or excessive crying; blood, crystals, or particles in urine; painful urination; little or no urine; swelling of hands, feet, or face.

Should my child or I be tested for melamine exposure?

Laboratory tests for melamine in

blood serum and urine exist but are still investigational and not yet commercially available. Because many people are exposed to very small, nontoxic amounts of melamine from different sources in the environment and industry, detection of melamine in



the body would not necessarily predict future illness.

What is CDC's advice for travelers to China?

Because of uncertainties related to dairy products in China at this time, CDC recommends that you do not consume any dairy products produced in China, including all brands of infant formula, milk or other drinks that contain milk products, food, such as yogurt or ice cream that could be milk-based or contain a large amount of milk or milk products. Many foods and drinks including candies, crackers, and desserts may contain milk or milk products. Ingredients on the food or drink label that suggest milk or milk products include milk, milk powder, whey, lactose, and casein. Additional advice for travelers is available at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/contentMelamineChina.aspx>.

Where can I get more information about melamine?

For more information visit the [Food and Drug Administration website](#). See the complete article at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/agent/melamine/chinafood.asp>.

Tips To Get PRC Visas In Hong Kong

We have heard numerous complaints from Americans who have recently received limited (less than multiple entry) Chinese visas. The following is advice that will (hopefully) increase your chances of receiving multiple entries:

--Make it clear on your application that you are applying for a multiple entry visa and why.

--Give as much detail as you can, at least for the first planned visit to China.

-- Apparently most travel agencies (such as CTS) are telling their clients that multiple entry visas are not available. The PRC Commission in Hong Kong has assured us otherwise. Either insist that the travel agency request a multi-entry visa or submit your application directly to the PRC visa office.

--You no longer have to provide hotel vouchers or airline reservation with your application. However, business applicants should be prepared to show why they need to travel into China on multiple occasions, including letter(s) of invitation from Chinese counterparts.

-- If you are a resident of Hong Kong, be sure to include a copy of your Hong Kong ID.

Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

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Shanghai, China

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Westgate Mall, 8th Floor

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2102, 2103, 2114, 2142

Fax: (86-21) 6217-2071

After Hours Emergencies:
(86-21) 6433-3936

Open 8:00am - 11:30am
and 1:30pm - 3:30pm
Monday to Friday.

*Closed on Tuesday
afternoons, weekends
and holidays.

[http://shanghai.usembassy-
china.org.cn/](http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/)

Someone Asked the Consul:

When Will My Ballot Arrive?

Your local voting officials in the U.S. should mail your absentee ballot 30 to 45 days before the November 4 general election to your overseas address. Return your voted ballot as early as possible. Be aware of your state's ballot receipt deadline, as well as any postmarking requirements.

Emergency Ballots:

The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) serves as an emergency ballot for voters who registered in time but did not receive an official ballot from local election officials. You can access the FWAB using www.fvap.gov as well.

Links of Interest to Overseas Citizens

If you have difficulty accessing the official Federal Voting Assistance Program website, you may also try the following links to get voting information.



Association of
Americans
Resident Over-
seas (AARO)

<http://aaro.org/>



Federation of
American
Women's Clubs
Overseas

<http://www.fawco.org/>



Expatriate Exchange
www.expatexchange.com/



American Citizens
Abroad (ACA)

<http://www.aca.ch/>



Overseas
Vote Foun-
dation

www.overseasvotefoundation.org



Democrats Abroad

Tel (202) 863-8177

Fax (202) 863-8063

www.democratsabroad.org

info@democratsabroad.org



Republicans
Abroad

Tel: (202) 608-1423

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man@republicansabroad.org

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