



## **MESSAGE FOR U.S. CITIZENS**

**U.S. Embassy, Manila, Philippines**

**September 17, 2014**

*THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES IS TRANSMITTING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION THROUGH THE EMBASSY WARDEN SYSTEM AS A PUBLIC SERVICE TO AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THE PHILIPPINES. PLEASE DISSEMINATE THIS MESSAGE TO ALL U.S. CITIZENS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION OR NEIGHBORHOOD.*

### **Increased Activity at the Mayon Volcano**

The U.S. Embassy advises U.S. citizens in the Philippines to exercise caution if contemplating travel in the vicinity of the Mayon Volcano, located in Albay Province, approximately 300 kilometers southeast of Manila, on the island of Luzon. In light of ongoing volcanic and seismic activity, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) has issued an **Alert LEVEL 3** over Mayon Volcano. This alert level means that “magma is at the crater and that a hazardous eruption is possible within weeks.”

The Philippine government has strongly advised the public to be vigilant and to refrain from entering Permanent Danger Zone (PDZ) around the volcano and the extended High Risk Zone (HRZ) to minimize risks from rock-falls, landslides and sudden explosions or dome collapse that may generate hazardous volcanic flows. According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC), local Philippine government officials have begun evacuating those living within the PDZ and HRZ. Moreover, PHIVOLCS has recorded increased rock-fall events and low frequency volcanic earthquakes over the last few days. Crater glow has become observable, indicating incandescence of the crater from molten lava and hot volcanic gas.

Philippine government officials have tentatively designated the following four schools as primary evacuation points: Gogon Elementary School (Barangay 38, Legazpi City); Bagumbayan Elementary School (F. Aquende Dr, Legazpi City); Albay Central School (Washington Drive, Legazpi City); and San Roque Elementary School (Gov. Forbes Extension, Legazpi). U.S. citizens residing near the Mayon volcano may wish to locate the evacuation center nearest to them. U.S. citizens residing within the affected areas are strongly encouraged to comply with any evacuation instructions given by the local authorities.

The U.S. Embassy advises U.S. citizens that the Mayon volcano area is an active volcano. In May 2013, the Mayon Volcano erupted, an incident that claimed the lives of five hikers, even though the PHIVOLCS Alert Level was at 0. Those planning travel to the Mayon volcano region are encouraged to monitor current conditions, maintain active awareness of local conditions, and especially refrain from unauthorized hiking in the PDZ or HRZ. Active stream/river channels and those identified as perennially lahar-prone areas on all sectors of the volcano should also be avoided especially during extreme weather conditions when there is heavy and prolonged rainfall.

In the event of an evacuation, Philippine government officials have designated the following four schools as primary evacuation points: Gogon Elementary School; Bagumbayan Elementary School; Albay Central School; and San Roque Elementary School. US citizens residing near the Mayon volcano may wish to locate the evacuation center nearest to them.

The U.S. Embassy reminds U.S. citizens to continue to monitor conditions in the area. Informational resources include the following:

- The U.S. Embassy's [Disaster Preparedness in the Philippines](#) webpage includes information to assist U.S. citizens in the Philippines and their families prepare for any disaster that may occur.
- The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) provides daily status reports on volcanic activity at <http://www.phivolcs.dost.gov.ph/>
- The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) is also closely monitoring the situation for emergency needs. Updates on volcanic activities and government preparation are available at <http://www.ndrrmc.gov.ph>
- The Albay province has also established the Task Force Mayon for all inquiries in case of an event. Their public hotline may be reached at: 052-7420149.

---

The Embassy is located at 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines and is open 0730-1600, Monday through Friday. The Embassy's main telephone number is (+632) 301-2000. U.S. citizens can dial this number and ask to be connected to the American Citizen Services (ACS) unit or with the Embassy Duty Officer (for calls outside of normal business hours). You can also contact the ACS unit through email at [ACSInfoManila@state.gov](mailto:ACSInfoManila@state.gov) or through the [Embassy Facebook page](#). Please visit [our website](#) for information on all services offered by the ACS unit.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in the Philippines enroll in the [Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) at [www.Travel.State.Gov](http://www.Travel.State.Gov). 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](#), including the [Travel Warning for the Philippines](#), Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the [Country Specific Information for the Philippines](#). For additional information, refer to ["A Safe Trip Abroad"](#) 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 in 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 iPhone App](#) to have travel information at your fingertips.