

WARDEN MESSAGE - Wildfire near Athens

American Embassy, Athens, Greece

August 23, 2009

This warden message is being issued to alert U.S. citizens to a catastrophic wildfire in Greece.

Greece is currently experiencing a widespread, destructive, fast-moving wildfire in the Athens area. According to the Greek Fire Department, the residential areas most affected by these fires are the northeastern suburbs of Agios Stefanos, Dionysos, Pallini, Marathonas, Pikermi, and Drafti.

There are also smaller but equally dangerous wildfires in other areas of Greece. Americans residing in or contemplating visits to Greece in the immediate future are advised to remain attentive to news reports about the wildfires, avoid the affected areas, and be prepared for road closures, detours, and strained public services. Greek authorities are likely to deal severely with persons who cause wildfires, even unintentionally. Campfires, barbecues, brush-burning, welding and other activities involving open flames or sparks outdoors are forbidden in many localities during the dry summer season.

U.S. Citizens are strongly encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Athens or the Consulate General in Thessaloniki through the Department of State's travel registration website at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known. While consular officers will do their utmost to assist Americans in a crisis, travelers should always be aware that local authorities bear the primary responsibility for the welfare of people living or traveling in their jurisdictions.

Contact information for the U.S. Embassy and Consulate in Greece:

The U.S. Embassy in Athens is located at 91 Vasilissis Sophias, Athens, Greece 10160. American Citizens Services: 210-720-2415, 210-720-2419 or 210-720-2420, fax. 210-725-3025 or Embassy Tel: 210-721-2951. The Internet address is <http://athens.usembassy.gov>

The U.S. Consulate General in Thessaloniki is located at 43 Tsimiski, 7th Floor GR-54623 Thessaloniki. American Citizens Services Section: 2310-242-905/6/7, ext. 3104. The Internet address is <http://thessaloniki.usconsulate.gov>

In case of an emergency when the Embassy or Consulate General is closed, an American in Greece can call 210-729-4444, and ask to speak to a consular officer concerning that emergency.

For further information about traveling in Greece may be obtained by visiting the embassy and consulate websites listed above, or view the Consular Information Sheet for Greece, available via the internet at <http://www.travel.state.gov>.