

**CONSULAR NEWS  
SENEGAL & GUINEA BISSAU**

**U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal  
November 2007**

**Welcome Jim Loveland**

We wish a warm welcome to our new Consular Section Chief James Loveland, who arrived in October. He replaces Beth Payne and will serve as the editor of this newsletter starting next month. Amanda Porter will continue as American Citizen Services Chief until Andrew Lee arrives at the end of November to fill that position.

**ATM Crime**

An American in Dakar for a short visit appears to have been the victim of a skimming device at a Dakar ATM. She used an ATM at the BICIS Sahn bank on Rue de Ouakam and soon after there were approximately \$7000 in additional charges on her debit card. While this has been known to happen in the U.S. and in other countries, this is the first report the U.S. Embassy in Dakar has received of this kind of crime in Senegal. The local authorities and the bank are aware of this incident and it is under investigation. Many Americans use ATMs in Dakar on a regular basis, and this is a reminder to be vigilant by checking your statements frequently for any unusual charges and keeping receipts for all charges you incur on your debit and credit cards. Many banks will reimburse you if you are the victim of this kind of crime, and it appears this victim's bank will refund her the money from the fraudulent charges.

**Crime Watch**

An American citizen was robbed at the transit station in Kaolack on the weekend of October 13. She was standing with her backpack on the ground between her legs when two men approached her. One pushed her and the other grabbed the bag, which contained her laptop computer, ipod, plane ticket, medication, and other valuables. She reported the robbery to the local police who have not yet found the thief or her bag.

An American woman was robbed and attacked with pepper spray when she resisted a robbery. She was returning to her home in Amitie on the evening of October 31 when two men on a motorbike approached her from behind. The man on the back jumped off the bike to take her handbag from her; she held on to the bag and there was a struggle. When the man could not grab the bag from her, he sprayed pepper spray all over her face and chest area. The woman fell down and the man dragged her for awhile until the handbag broke loose and they (driver and the man) sped away along with the bag. The victim screamed for help but no one assisted her. Her handbag contained a digital camera, 1 GB of memory, camera case, cell phone, 20,000 cfa,

wallet containing a notarized copy of a U.S. passport, Visa card, student I.D. card, insurance card, and miscellaneous papers.

An American woman's passport and wallet were stolen from her bag Nov 3. While attending a concert at French Cultural Center in Dakar, she put her handbag containing her wallet and passport under her chair and stood up to dance. After dancing, she reached back to her handbag in preparation to leave, but she could not see her wallet in her handbag. The wallet, passport, along with 30, 000 CFA and other valuables were stolen; she immediately alerted the authorities at the premises, but she could not recover the stolen items.

An American woman was pickpocketed in downtown Dakar on the evening of November 5. Her wallet, containing 500 U.S. Dollars, credit card, Driver's License and a U.S. passport was stolen.

An American woman was the victim of a home invasion in Yoff on the weekend of November 2. She and her dog were sleeping in her apartment when the robbers entered the first floor and stole numerous items from the office including three laptops. She did not have bars on her windows, a guard, or an alarm. Local police are investigating.

### **November Holidays**

We will be closed for the following holidays in November:

November 12 – Veterans Day

November 22 – Thanksgiving

### **November Frequently Asked Question**

Q. There have been cholera and malaria outbreaks recently. What can we do to prevent these diseases?

A. According to the local press, there have been over 2000 cases of cholera in Senegal recently, primarily in the Diourbel region. Malaria is also prevalent in Senegal, and one American reportedly died from malaria in Senegal last month. The Centers for Disease Control website ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) contains a wealth of information, some of which is pasted below, that can help you make informed decisions to protect your health while living and traveling in Senegal.

#### **CHOLERA:**

##### **Description and Symptoms:**

Cholera is an acute intestinal infection caused by toxigenic *Vibrio cholerae* O-group 1 or O-group 139. The infection is often mild and self-limited or subclinical. Severe illness may lead to volume depletion. Even patients with severe cases respond dramatically to simple fluid- and electrolyte-replacement therapy. Infection is acquired primarily by ingesting contaminated water or food; person-to-person transmission is rare. Cholera is characterized by acute, profuse watery diarrhea, described as "rice-water stools," and often vomiting, leading to volume depletion. Signs

and symptoms include tachycardia, loss of skin turgor, dry mucous membranes, hypotension, and thirst. If untreated, volume depletion can rapidly lead to hypovolemic shock and death. Additional symptoms, including muscle cramps, are secondary to the resulting electrolyte imbalances.

#### Cholera Prevention:

“Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it” . Travelers to cholera-affected areas should adhere to this adage and avoid eating high-risk foods, especially fish and shellfish. Food that is cooked and served hot, fruits and vegetables peeled by the traveler personally, beverages and ice that are made from boiled or chlorinated water, and carbonated beverages are usually safe.

Chemoprophylaxis is not indicated. Travelers should never bring perishable seafood back into the United States.

#### Cholera Treatment:

Rehydration is the cornerstone of therapy; antibiotics are adjunct therapy and may decrease fluid requirements and duration of illness. Oral rehydration salts, and when necessary intravenous fluids and electrolytes, if administered in a timely manner and in adequate volumes, will reduce case-fatality rates to well under 1%.

#### MALARIA:

##### Description and Symptoms:

Malaria in humans is caused by one of four protozoan species of the genus *Plasmodium*: *P. falciparum*, *P. vivax*, *P. ovale*, or *P. malariae*. All species are transmitted by the bite of an infected female *Anopheles* mosquito. Occasionally, transmission occurs by blood transfusion, organ transplantation, needle-sharing, or congenitally from mother to fetus. Although malaria can be a fatal disease, illness and death from malaria are largely preventable. Malaria is characterized by fever and influenza-like symptoms, including chills, headache, myalgias, and malaise; these symptoms can occur at intervals. Malaria may be associated with anemia and jaundice, and *P. falciparum* infections can cause seizures, mental confusion, kidney failure, coma, and death. Malaria symptoms can develop as early as 7 days after initial exposure in a malaria-endemic area and as late as several months after departure from a malarious area, after chemoprophylaxis has been terminated.

##### Malaria Prevention:

No vaccine is currently available. All travelers to malaria-endemic areas should be advised that taking an appropriate drug regimen and using antimosquito measures will help prevent malaria. Travelers should be informed that no method can protect completely against the risk for contracting malaria. Bednets and insect repellent are widely available in Senegal. Please visit the CDC website for additional detailed information regarding prevention options, including detailed information on dosages and use of chemoprophylaxis (<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh4-Malaria.aspx>)

##### Malaria Treatment:

Specific treatment with antimalarial drugs is available. Travelers should be advised that malaria can be treated effectively early in the course of the disease but that delay of appropriate therapy can have serious or even fatal consequences. Travelers who have symptoms of malaria should be

advised to seek prompt medical evaluation, including thick and thin blood smears, as soon as possible. If possible, it is advisable to consult with a provider who has specialized travel/tropical medicine expertise or with an infectious disease physician. CDC recommendations for malaria treatment can be found at [http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/diagnosis\\_treatment/treatment.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/diagnosis_treatment/treatment.htm).

### **Hours for American Citizen Services**

We are open for routine American citizen services Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. When you arrive at the Embassy, please show your U.S. passport or proof of American citizenship to the guard and go directly to the Consular Receptionist window. You do not have to wait in line with visa applicants.

Emergency American citizen services are available during U.S. Embassy normal working hours which are Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For an after-hours emergency involving an American citizen, please call 77-383-9566.

We are also available by e-mail at [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto:consulardakar@state.gov).

### **Have You Left Senegal or Guinea-Bissau?**

If you have left Senegal or Guinea-Bissau, please e-mail us at [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto:consulardakar@state.gov) so we can remove your name from the warden registration database. If you would like to remain on the newsletter mailing list, please let us know in your e-mail.