



SAFETY UPDATES

- AIL MINISTRY IS CONTINUING TO WORK WITH OUR LONG TERM MINISTRY PARTNERS IN BOTH ENSENADA AND OAXACA.
- WE RECOMMEND ALL GROUPS SERVING IN ENSENADA ENTER INTO MEXICO THROUGH THE TECATE BORDER CROSSING. THIS ELIMINATES ALL DRIVING IN BUSY TIJUANA.
- WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU PLAN YOUR ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS FOR INCREASED SAFETY.
- ALL OF OUR GROUPS ARE ACCOMPANIED BY EXPERIENCED AIL MINISTRY STAFFERS ONCE YOU ARRIVE ON SITE.
- THE ENSENADA POLICE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF ALL OUR GROUPS AND THE LOCAL COMMANDER IS A MEMBER OF OUR PARTNER CHURCH IN EL SAUZAL, OUR BAJA MINISTRY BASE.
- ALL PARTICIPANTS WITH AIL MINISTRY ARE REGISTERED WITH THE US STATE DEPARTMENT.

As many of you are aware, Mexico is in the middle of some difficult times. It seems as if everyday the news is reporting another story about the ongoing drug violence. In the last twelve months, almost seven thousand deaths have been attributed to the "narcos," or drug traffickers.

If you or your churches are planning to serve in Mexico, or if you have a vacation scheduled there, understandably you are concerned.

As Executive Director of Adventures in Life Ministry, I too am concerned. Consequently, I keep abreast of news stories and government reports in both the United States and Mexico pertaining to any state of affairs that impact you, your families and the churches with whom we serve.

With this in mind, I wanted to take a few moments to share with you my thoughts and the thoughts of our Board of Directors on this issue.

Mexico is a large country, over three times the size of the state of Texas. The population is over 110 million, mostly located in and around the various state capitals of the country.

Over half of the deaths related to drug violence have occurred in one state, Chihuahua, just south of Texas. This includes the cities of Juarez, Villa Ahumada, and Acuña, more than 800 miles from our nearest ministry site, Ensenada.

In the Tijuana area, closer to where we are serving, there has been violence, but by all accounts, the city is much safer following the demise of one of the largest Mexican drug cartels in October 2008. Couple this with the recent arrests in the United States and Mexico of hundreds of additional suspected cartel members and the government believes they are finally gaining the upper hand.

The areas where we are serving this year, Ensenada and Oaxaca, are virtually free of this type of violence. As in all cities, there is crime, but there has been no major drug violence reported in either of these areas.

Violence in the Tijuana area, a major concern of those serving with Adventures in Life, while still present, seems to have peaked late last year and is declining.

In their recently released [Travel Alert](#), the US State Department advises that "Common-sense precautions such as avoiding areas where prostitution and drug dealing might occur can help ensure that travel to Mexico is safe and enjoyable."

While all travel involves some risk, Adventures in Life Ministry believes that by taking a few reasonable precautions, you, your church, and your family will be safe serving with us.

Specifically for those of you who will be serving with us in Ensenada, we recommend that you enter and plan to depart Mexico during daylight hours and through the Tecate Border crossing. This involves more driving and planning, but we believe that it is best to avoid Tijuana and their constantly changing road conditions, rather than risk getting lost in this confusing city.

I want to stress again that we take the safety of our mission participants and partner churches seriously. Having served in the same communities in both Ensenada and Oaxaca for many years, where the residents know and trust us, continues to be a major asset to the safety and well being of those serving with Adventures in Life Ministry.

As a ministry, we ask for your continued prayers and look forward to many safe years of ministry together in the communities we serve in Mexico.

I hope this answers any questions or concerns you or your church may have about serving in Mexico.

Dave

Dave Miller
Executive Director
Adventures in Life Ministry