

Travel Alert

Passports Will Be Needed For Cruising

(NAPSA)—While making arrangements for your next vacation, plan ahead to make sure you meet new passport requirements. U.S. citizens will soon need a passport for travel within the Western Hemisphere via any mode of transportation—cruise, airplane or vehicle. Here are the new passport rules for U.S. citizens and other travelers coming to and leaving the United States.

- **December 31, 2006**—Passports will be required for all air and sea travel to and from the Caribbean, Bermuda, Central and South America, Canada and Mexico.

- **December 31, 2007**—Passports or other accepted travel documents will be required for land border crossings to and from Canada or Mexico.

Countries in the Western Hemisphere are the most heavily visited cruise destinations in the world, accounting for about 70 percent of all cruise ship visits.

Cruise passengers may already be planning cruises for 2006, but currently, the State Department estimates that only 20 percent of all Americans have passports.

Avoid The Rush

To avoid the rush and the possibility of not being able to travel, the travel experts at the International Council of Cruise Lines offer these suggestions:

- Remember that the new travel rules will mean that a passport is required to re-enter the U.S. from travel to the Caribbean, Bermuda, Central and South America, Canada and Mexico.

- Even if you have a confirmed booking for travel abroad, you



GOT A PASSPORT?—The State Department estimates that only 20 percent of all Americans have one.

may be denied boarding if you do not have a valid passport.

- Your passport can open the doors to travel you may not have considered before, such as cruising in Europe, Australia and Asia.

- Passports are valid for 10 years. The initial price for a passport is \$97 and then \$67 when you renew. If you take two vacations a year, the cost of the passport per vacation is less than a frozen drink with an umbrella at the pool.

How To Get A Passport

A passport is easy to obtain by visiting one of the 6,000 passport acceptance facilities across the U.S. For more information about applying for a passport, U.S. citizens can visit www.travel.state.gov or call the National Passport Information Center at 1-877-487-2778. Foreign nationals should contact their respective governments to obtain passports.