



Building Community Across Borders since 1978

Corazón Security Measures May 2012

We believe that the accounts of violence you read about in the papers or see on the television do not affect your travel to Tijuana with Corazón. Much of this reported violence has occurred in other states in Mexico, far from the California border. While there have been incidents of violence involving Americans, these involved some decidedly risky behavior. Driving late at night, displaying tens of thousands of dollars worth of equipment, and camping on isolated beaches have inherent risks. These were attractive and vulnerable targets where nationality was not the motive; they were simple robberies and assaults. However, common-sense precautions such as visiting only legitimate business and tourist areas and avoiding areas where criminal activity might be expected to occur can help ensure that travel to Mexico is both safe and enjoyable.

Corazón employs a number of safeguards and procedures to make your day in Mexico a safe and productive one. First and foremost, the areas that Corazón works in are not the same ones where reported violent events have taken place. Additionally, with well over 7,000 people having participated in our program throughout the years, we also have wide community support. The people in Mexico know us and they look out for us.

In addition to this community support Corazon has specific measures in place to further ensure our safety while working across the border. Specifically:

- We are in frequent contact with the US Consulate in Tijuana, the Department of Binational Affairs, as well as the local and state police. Each of these entities is capable of responding to an emergency, if any were to arise. This regular communication with the authorities enables them to warn us of any unusual activity scheduled anywhere near our route to the worksite.
- We have prepared and rehearsed written action plans for emergency scenarios. Each staff person is trained how to respond to these scenarios and carries a list of emergency phone numbers.
- We have Mexican staff members on duty every Saturday to assist us with any incidents that may arise. We are in radio contact with our Mexico office from the time we leave the parking lot in the U.S. until we return to the border.
- Your trip begins very early in the morning, in the safety of a caravan. You will be guided across the border to the project site and then back to the border at the end of the day. This caravan will stay with you for the entire day in Mexico.
- If a member of the caravan has car trouble (like a flat tire or a traffic ticket) the caravan as a whole (or some staff members) will stay with you and assist you until your issues are resolved. Every caravan has Corazon staff members in cars at the front and back, as well as scattered throughout the line.
- Each staff car is in radio communication with the other staff members ensuring that any breaks in the caravan process are quickly recognized and remedied. For especially large caravans more staff vehicles will provide support to assure that there are no complications as we move through intersections near the border.
- Our projects are designed to be easily completed in one day, with the goal of getting your group safely back to the border before dark. Should you somehow become separated from the caravan, we will supply you with maps to guide you through Tijuana and make your crossing back home as safe and easy as possible. We review the maps and the caravan process at lunch time. The map also includes important information concerning your legal



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- rights in case you are stopped by police, along with local phone numbers for Corazón staff members, both in the US and Mexico.
- During the day we have Corazon participants watching our jobsite as well as your vehicles. This constant surveillance further ensures the safety of your vehicles and contributes to your assurance that your vehicle is not at risk of theft or vandalism.
- If a group so desires, we have arrangements with bus companies to charter both 25 & 50 passenger buses,

It is not our intent to downplay your concerns about the violence that is occurring in Mexico. We do, however, want you to understand all the safeguards Corazón has traditionally had in place to assure your safety, as well as the additional measures we have added in the last few years.

We monitor the situation on the ground in Mexico and are aware and informed of anything that might affect your visit.

We have radio communication not just between staff in Mexico and staff in the US, but within the caravan itself.

We escort you from the US, across the border to the project site, and then back home, well before dark

Your group will be among our friends in Mexico, in villages far from the violence you read and hear about, who will watch over you and your vehicles during your stay in their community.

Our goal is to make this day a memorable one. We believe we have all the components in place to do so.

If you have any questions regarding your trip to Mexico with Corazón, please don't hesitate to call the office at 714.547.0357.

Thank You for Your Support!