



Fact sheet / Document d'information

U.S. Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) is a U.S. law that will require all travellers to carry a valid passport or other secure document to enter the United States. It is being implemented in two stages:

- For air travel, the new rules came into effect on January 23, 2007.
- For land and sea travel, the new rules are not yet in place. The U.S. government has released a proposal for land and sea implementation.

The Government of Canada continues to recommend that travellers carry a valid Canadian passport for all visits abroad, including the United States. A passport is the only universally accepted identification document, and it proves that you have a right to return to Canada. To find out how to obtain a Canadian passport, visit Passport Canada's Web site at www.passportcanada.gc.ca.

AIR TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES

Canadian citizens **flying** to or through the United States must present a valid **Canadian passport** to confirm their citizenship and identity. A **NEXUS card** when used at a kiosk at participating airports is also acceptable.

This requirement applies to all travellers, regardless of age, including children.

LAND AND WATER TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES

Canadian citizens driving or boating to the United States currently **DO NOT** need a passport to cross the Canada-U.S. border

On June 20, 2007, the U.S. government issued for public comment its proposed rule for the implementation of the WHTI at land and marine ports of entry. The rule is expected to be finalized in fall 2007 and could be put into effect within a minimum of 60 days. The rule proposes the following:

- Beginning January 31, 2008, Canadian and U.S. citizens will require government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's licence, together with proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate, to enter the United States by land and water.
- Youth under the age of 16 are only required to present a birth certificate.
- As early as **summer 2008**, all Canadian citizens (excluding children under 16) travelling by land or water will be required to present a valid **Canadian passport**, a **NEXUS card** or a **Free and Secure Trade (FAST)** card, or other secure document considered acceptable by the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security.

A valid Canadian passport, NEXUS card and FAST card are always acceptable travel documents to enter the United States by land or water.

SPECIAL TRAVEL PROGRAMS TO THE UNITED STATES

NEXUS

The NEXUS program is designed to expedite the border clearance process for low-risk, pre-approved travellers into Canada and the United States by air, land and water. NEXUS members can use self-serve kiosks at participating airports, dedicated lanes at land borders and report in advance by telephone at marine ports of entry. For more details, visit the NEXUS Web site at www.nexus.gc.ca.

FAST

The **Free and Secure Trade (FAST)** program is a commercial process offered to pre-approved importers, carriers and registered drivers. Shipments for approved companies, transported by approved carriers using registered drivers, are cleared into either Canada or the United States with greater speed and certainty, and at a reduced cost of compliance.

More Information

For more information, visit the **Canada Border Services Agency's Web site** at www.cbsa.gc.ca or call the **Border Information Service** toll-free line at 1-800-461-9999.