



ISLAND OF HAWAII VOLCANO UPDATE

May 15, 2018, 4:00 p.m. HST

LATEST UPDATE

VOLCANIC ASH

Plumes of steam and ash are being emitted from Kīlauea summit in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. This is causing ash to fall downwind across portions of the southern district of Ka'ū. Ash is currently being reported along Highway 11 to the town of Pāhala.

- Avoid excessive exposure to ash which is an eye and respiratory irritant.
- Those with breathing issues should take extra precaution to minimize exposure.
- Motorists are advised to drive with caution.
- All roads in this area are open at this time.

For a guide on volcanic ash, visit <https://bit.ly/2ljlqBV>.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- There is absolutely **no reason at this time for travelers to change or alter their leisure or business plans.**
 - None of the Hawaiian Islands are affected by Kīlauea volcano except a remote area on the island of Hawai'i's east side (see attached map of affected area) and the Kīlauea Summit. Out of the island's 4,028 square miles, only a remote area of less than 10 square miles is affected – Leilani Estates and Lanipuna Gardens Subdivisions in Puna. As a precautionary measure, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park (some 40 miles away) has been closed indefinitely as a precaution should a steam explosion occur in the crater.
 - **Air Access:** All flights into Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport at Keāhole - KOA (west) and Hilo International Airport - ITO (east) are operating normally.
 - **Accommodations and Activities:** All accommodations, activities and attractions on the island are also operating normally, with the exception of those in the area affected by the lava activity.
 - **Air Quality:** Air quality on the island of Hawai'i remains largely unchanged with this situation. However, air quality near where the volcanic activity is occurring can be hazardous (SO₂-sulfur dioxide) and light ash fall may be present, and officials are continuing to monitor air quality.
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HAWAII COUNTY CIVIL DEFENSE ERUPTION MAP

To view the interactive map (please wait for the page to load), visit: <https://goo.gl/i7RbrB>

AIRPORTS, ACCOMMODATIONS & ACTIVITIES

- All airports on the island of Hawai'i continue to operate normally.
- All accommodations, activities and attractions on the island are also operating normally, with the exception of those in the area affected by the volcanic activity.
- Visitors who have already booked a trip to the island of Hawai'i with accommodations or activities in/near the Puna district, should call their provider with any questions or concerns.
- Effective May 12, those who have vacation rental reservations in the Lower Puna restricted area should find alternative accommodations, until further notice.

ERUPTION LOCATION

- The volcanic activity and where lava has flowed along the East Rift Zone in/near Leilani Estates and Lanipuna Gardens Subdivisions is limited to an isolated area in Lower Puna on the island's east side. This area in the Puna district covers only less than a 10-square-mile area of the island's 4,028 square miles. The district of Puna is approximately 500 square miles, or the size of half of Rhode Island.
- This is more than 100 driving miles away from the western Kohala and Kona Coasts, where the island's major visitor accommodations and resorts are located. This is the area furthest from the current activity.
- In addition, Hilo town is approximately 20 miles away and unaffected by Kīlauea volcano.
- Kīlauea is one of the most active volcanoes on Earth, and has been erupting for the past 35 years.
- The topography of the island between east and west is un conducive for a natural flow.

VACATION RENTALS IN LOWER PUNA AREA

- Effective May 12, the County of Hawai'i Civil Defense Agency has directed all vacation rental owners and operators in Lower Puna to cease operations so that emergency operations can focus on residents who live in the area.
- The Lower Puna restricted area encompasses the area accessed by Highway 132 from Leilani Estates to Kapoho, Highway 137 from Kapoho to Kalapana, and Highway 130 from Pāhoa to Pohoiki, including Pāhoa's Black Sands Beach Subdivision.
- Current vacation renters in this restricted area should find alternative accommodations outside the restricted area as soon as possible.
- Until further notice, visitors who have vacation rental reservations in the restricted area should find alternative accommodations.
- This directive has been issued to owners and operators of vacation rentals within the restricted area, online advertisers of vacation rentals, current vacation renters in the area, and vacation renters with reservations.

AIR QUALITY

Air quality on the island of Hawai'i remains largely unchanged with the exception of the where the volcanic activity is happening can have hazardous levels of SO₂ (sulfur dioxide). Officials constantly monitor SO₂ levels across the island. VOG or volcanic haze is relatively common on an island with active volcanoes, and the level of haze is dependent on volcanic activity and wind direction/strength. To view SO₂ conditions in real-time across the state, visit <http://www.hiso2index.info/>. For statewide Air Quality, visit Air Now at <https://bit.ly/2133ixd> (data and forecasts courtesy of the Hawai'i Department of Health – Environmental Health).

REPORTS ABOUT ACID RAIN

- News reports about acid rain during the current Kīlauea eruption have mischaracterized the severity of its potential effect on human health. In fact, acid rain is a common occurrence anytime there is rainfall on an area where volcanic haze, or VOG, is in the atmosphere, whether on the island of Hawai'i or anywhere else in the world.
- According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "Walking in acid rain, or even swimming in a lake affected by acid rain, is no more dangerous to humans than walking in normal rain or swimming in non-acidic lakes."

- Data about the composition of rain falling on the island of Hawai'i is closely monitored on a continual basis by the National Atmospheric Deposition Program's National Trends Network.
- Visit the State Department of Health's Hawai'i Interagency Vog Information Dashboard for the latest information at www.ivhhn.org/vog/.

HAWAI'I VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

Most of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park has been closed until further notice. Only the Park's Kahuku Unit is open during its normal hours, Friday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For Park updates, visit <https://www.nps.gov/havo/planyourvisit/lava2.htm>.

- Kīlauea Summit: Ash plumes are being emitted from Halema'uma'u Crater. Dangerous debris may also be emitted should a steam explosion resulting from the lowering of the lava lake occur. For Volcano Watch updates, visit <https://on.doi.gov/2r8G4zE>.

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE PUNA AREA

- Road closures are taking place on select areas of Highway 130, 132 and 137.
- No access is allowed at this time for residents of Lanipuna Gardens.
- Residents and visitors who do not have official business in Leilani Estates and Lanipuna Gardens are asked to stay away from the area.
- As a precaution, residents of Lower Puna between Kapoho and Kalapana are advised to be on alert in the event of possible volcanic activity in the area.
- Temporary flight restrictions are in place for most of Lower Puna. Drones will be confiscated in this area.
- Those who have rented accommodations or made tour reservations in the general area should check with those respective companies for the latest updates.
- Unless otherwise noted, area businesses are open and accessible. Motorists are advised to drive with caution and be prepared for increased traffic.
- Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Division of State Parks has closed Lava Tree State Monument and Mackenzie State Recreation Area until further notice.
- All beach parks in Lower Puna have been closed, including the Pohoiki Boat Ramp.
- The County of Hawai'i has closed the Kalapana Viewing Area until further notice.

VOLCANOES IN HAWAI'I

Eruptions of Hawaiian volcanoes are typically nonexplosive or weakly explosive. Hawaiian eruptions, which is a term used by volcanologists worldwide to characterize similar eruptive style at other volcanoes, are usually gentle due to its highly fluid lava composition which tends to flow freely both beneath the surface and upon eruption. For more information about Hawaiian eruptions, visit <https://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/hawaii/page26.html>.

Travelers planning a trip to the island of Hawai'i who have questions can contact the Hawai'i Tourism United States Call Center at 1-800-GO-HAWAII (1-800-464-2924). For other updates, visit <http://hawaiiitourismauthority.org/news/special-alert/>.

HELPFUL LINKS

Hawai'i County Civil Defense

<http://www.hawaiicounty.gov/active-alerts>

Hawai'i County Eruption Map

<https://goo.gl/i7RbrB>

Hawaiian Volcano Observatory / USGS

<https://on.doi.gov/2FEPVBm>

Volcano Watch updates: <https://on.doi.gov/2r8G4zE>

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

<https://www.nps.gov/havo/planyourvisit/lava2.htm>

Volcanic Ash Guide

<https://bit.ly/2ljlqBV>

SO2 Measurement Map – Department of Health

<http://www.hiso2index.info>

General Air Quality / Air Now

<https://bit.ly/2l33ixd>

State of Hawai'i Interagency Vog Information Dashboard

<http://www.ivhhn.org/vog/>

Hawaiian Eruptions

<https://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/hawaii/page26.html>

TOURISM UPDATES

Hawai'i Tourism Authority Special Alerts

<http://www.hawaii tourism authority.org/news/special-alert/>

TRAVELERS MAY CALL

Travelers planning a trip to the island of Hawai'i who have questions can contact the Hawai'i Tourism United States Call Center at 1-800-GO-HAWAII (1-800-464-2924).