American Red Cross

Be **Red Cross** Ready
Prepare so you can protect.

Volcano

Preparedness Checklist

A volcano is an opening in the Earth's crust that allows molten rock, gases, and debris to escape to the surface. Volcanic eruptions can kill people and destroy property. Eruptions fall into two broad types:

- **Explosive eruptions** include widespread ashfall, the release of dangerous hot gases, volcanic rocks, and mud.
- **Quiet eruptions** include lava flows that can ignite fires and produce harmful gas clouds.

Volcanoes have the potential to cause great harm and destruction. But we can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your home.

What to Do: Before

Know Your Risk

Know if you are in an area at risk. There are many potentially active volcanoes in the US, including Alaska, California, Washington, Oregon, Hawaii, and the islands of the Pacific. Reach out to your local emergency management office to learn about your community's risk of volcanoes.

Plan to Stay Connected

- Sign up for local government emergency alerts. Plan to listen to local emergency information and follow instructions from local officials.
  - The US Geological Survey (USGS) uses a nationwide volcano alert system to describe volcanic conditions. Local officials closely monitor USGS information, and issue guidance to keep community members safe.
- Create a support team to help you prepare and stay safe. Plan how you can help each other.
- Plan to reconnect with loved ones if you are separated. Carry contact cards. Set up a group text message. Designate an out-of-town contact who can help your household reconnect. It may be easier to reach people outside the affected area.

Plan to Stay Safe

- **Understand how your community will respond to an eruption.** Your local government has plans to help protect people. Local officials may advise you to leave the area or take shelter where you are. Learn about your community's plan, and then make plans with your household.
- **Have an evacuation plan.** The only way to stay safe from a blast, flying debris, hot gases, fast-moving mud, rock, water (known as lahars) and lava flow is to evacuate if local officials advise. Know where you will go, how you will get there, and where you will stay. Plan for your pets and livestock. Follow recommended routes.
- **Have a plan to protect your health from ash, smog, and glass.** Officials may advise you to stay inside to protect yourself from ash, debris, volcanic smog (vog) which is a toxic air pollutant, and volcanic glass. These can harm your health, especially your lungs, eyes, and skin.
  - Plan to limit your time outdoors. Know how to close windows and doors. Use an indoor air cleaner.
  - Short-term use of N95 masks can help protect against volcanic ash but not gases.
  - Plan to avoid driving because ash can reduce visibility, make surfaces slippery, and clog car engines.
  - If your indoor area continues to have poor air quality, move to a safer place.
- **Plan to avoid river valleys.** Lahars can rush down valleys and streams, destroying anything in their path.

Gather Emergency Supplies

Gather food, water, and medicine. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home Kit.

- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
- Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
- Have N95 respirators, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and goggles.
- Drinking water may be contaminated, have at least one gallon of water per person per day.
- Have a 1-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
- Keep personal, financial, and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up). Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.

What to Do: During

- Listen carefully to local emergency information.
- Depending on your location, officials may advise you to evacuate or stay indoors. Follow this guidance.

What to Do: After

Prevent Injuries

- If you evacuated, wait until officials say it is safe before you return home. If you stayed inside, wait until officials say it is safe to go outside.
- Be careful, as ash makes surfaces slippery.

Protect Your Health

- Volcanic ash can make drinking water unsafe. Check with your local health department about drinking water safety.
- **When in doubt, throw it out!** Throw out food exposed to ash, heat, smoke, fumes, or chemicals.
- Follow local public health guidance for ash cleanup. Wear protective equipment (an N95 respirator, gloves, long-sleeve shirts, long pants, shoes, socks, and goggles). N95 respirators do not filter toxic gases and vapors.
- Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators, grills, and camp stoves outdoors and away from windows.

Take Care of Yourself

- It's normal to have a lot of bad feelings, stress or anxiety.
- Eat healthy food and get enough sleep to help you deal with stress.
- You can contact the Disaster Distress Helpline for free if you need to talk to someone. Call or text **1-800-985-5990.**

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