



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**STATE ADVISES RESIDENTS DOWNWIND OF LAVA FLOW TO TAKE
PRECAUTIONS AGAINST SMOKE**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) is advising Hawaii Island residents living near the lava flow in Puna that began on June 27 to plan ahead for potential smoke exposure from burning vegetation and low levels of sulfur dioxide. The smoke effect on nearby communities will vary largely depending on unpredictable wind and weather conditions.

Smoke contains a mixture of gases and fine particles that may trigger adverse respiratory conditions. Additionally, encroaching lava may contain low levels of sulfur dioxide, an irritant gas emitted by the Kilauea Volcano.

DOH recommends that residents in smoke affected areas avoid outdoor activities or physical exertion. People with respiratory illness or heart disease, older adults and children are urged to avoid smoke exposure. Smoke may worsen symptoms for individuals who have pre-existing respiratory conditions, such as allergies, asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Individuals that have these conditions should keep their medication refilled and use daily (controller) medication as prescribed. Anyone who feels they may need medication or medical attention should contact their physician.

Due to the unpredictable nature of the lava flow, residents and visitors are advised to listen to Hawaii County Civil Defense updates and advisories.

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