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KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII

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KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

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DOH ADVISES PUBLIC TO BE MINDFUL OF AIR QUALITY AS KĪLAUEA ERUPTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HONOLULU — On December 23, 2024, at approximately 2:20 a.m., Kīlauea Volcano began erupting in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the eruption has stabilized within the crater, is occurring within a closed area of the park and there are currently no immediate threats to lives or infrastructure.

Although the USGS has lowered Kīlauea's volcano alert level from Warning to Watch, vents are continuing to erupt on the floor of the southwest part of the summit caldera and high levels of volcanic gas can have far-reaching effects downwind (generally southwest) of the summit. As the eruption and volcanic gas emissions continue, downwind communities may be affected by vog conditions (hazy air pollution caused by volcanic emissions). Particulates in the air and levels of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) may increase and fluctuate in various localized areas on Hawai'i Island, causing poor air quality. Currently, air quality levels are elevated at the Ocean View and Pahala air quality monitoring stations.

The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) is encouraging residents and visitors to access Hawai'i Ambient Air Quality Data on the Clean Air Branch website at <https://health.hawaii.gov/cab/hawaii-ambient-air-quality-data/> and the Hawai'i Interagency Vog Information Dashboard at www.ivhhn.org/vog/ for the most comprehensive and up-to-date online information on vog and SO₂ from volcanic activity in Hawai'i.

Hawai'i residents and visitors are advised to be mindful of the surrounding conditions, and how they may react to vog in the air. In the event of vogy conditions, take the following precautionary measures:

- Reduce outdoor activities that cause heavy breathing. Avoiding outdoor activity and exercise during vog conditions can reduce exposure and minimize health risks. This is especially important for sensitive groups, such as children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory conditions including asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and chronic lung and heart disease.
- People with asthma or a chronic respiratory disease should always have medications available. Daily prescribed medications should be taken on schedule.
- People experiencing health effects should contact their medical provider as soon as possible if they develop symptoms, as respiratory conditions might worsen rapidly in heavy SO₂ or vog conditions.
- Stay indoors and close windows and doors. When using an air conditioner, set it to recirculate. If you are in a car, set the air conditioner to recirculate.
- Face masks (surgical, cloth, KF94, KN95, N95) do not provide protection from SO₂ or vog. However, they can be effective in outdoor environments in reducing inhaled hazardous particulates associated with falling ash and Pele's hair, very thin strands of volcanic glass.
- Do not smoke and avoid second-hand smoke.
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
- Have family emergency plans prepared and ready.
- Heed warnings by county and state emergency management officials.

Vog and air quality updates are available through the:

- [Hawai'i Interagency Vog Information Dashboard](#)
- [DOH Clean Air Branch](#)
- [U.S. Geological Survey Kīlauea Volcano Updates](#)

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