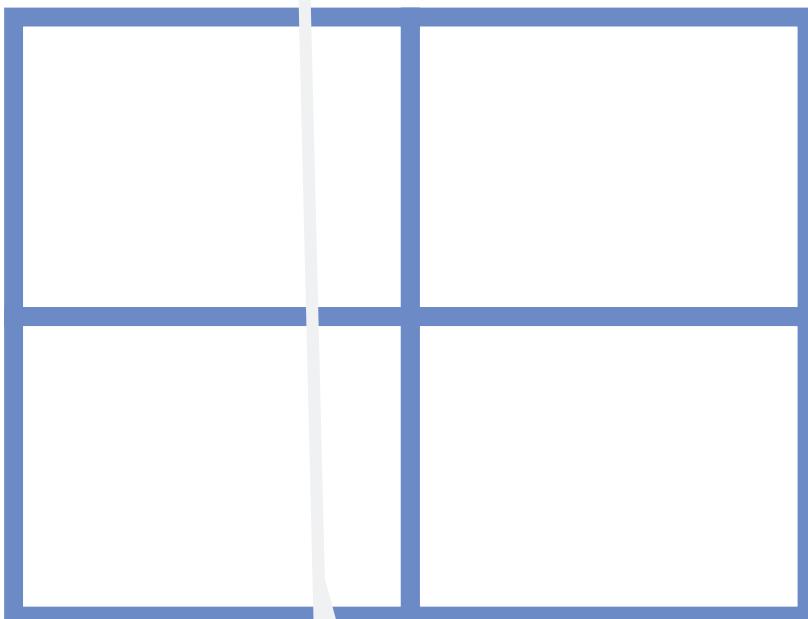




THE HEALTH HAZARDS OF VOLCANIC ASH

A guide for the public





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The document has been reviewed by the International Volcanic Health Hazard Network (IVHHN), the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the World Health Organization.

This guide details the potential health effects of volcanic ash and provides information on the effects of volcanic ash.



CONTENTS

1	1.	What is volcanic ash?.....	Page	2
	2.	What are the effects of ash on health?		4
	2.1	Respiratory effects		4
		Why are people with chronic lung.....		5
		problems at special risk?		
		What factors affect respiratory symptoms?....		6
	2.2	Eye symptoms		7
	2.3	Skin irritation		8
	2.4	Indirect health effects of ashfall.....		8
	3.	What to do to protect yourself against ash.....		11
	4.	Precautions for children		14
	5.	Sources and further information		15



1. What is volcanic ash?

V ca cah c - ed ff e átce, fñag e ted, ca c
c (e tha 2 da eté). V ca cah - fe ht é
c et the ca but c he tfa atgreate d ta ce.
It f edd g ca ce -, f aaaa che fht
c thatf d the de f ca e, f ed-h t ud
aa ña. A h áe a ea a cede ed gu thet e f
ca a d thef f theéut. Thu, tca ña ge c n
f ghtg ne t bac a dca á e f be g egí t
t be g a f e a tacu - dé. A ñb e a h b c - ut
u ght, f educ g b t a d - et e caue c ete
dá e dñ gda ght.

E u t ca a - ge éate
thu dñ a d ght g f
f ct bet ee the f e,
a ñb e átce hchca be
- ca ed ab e the ca -
acc a ágea h u e a
the - ed d.

Láge a h de - t ca
c átate t e t g

a dbec e thefutne t - fa ca cñeg . Thefet t - f
the - áud a - ca e diet da hde - t. Th
be efca effect f ca - ut egh, ét e, theha ád
f ne le te tñt , - fet e - ca caea áre fte
de e - uated.

2

He h fa e ah átce ca ha e ac d e at g hch a
caue t̄at̄ t̄ the ug a de e . Th ac d e at g a d
ne ed b a , hch a the u te ca até u e .
Ac d ca hca a da age egetat̄ , ead gt a fa e.

I t̄ t̄l t̄ , ca ca hca e t̄e fe health
t̄ be , but ge e t̄ate uch a et . Pe e ca be t̄e
feaf ful f the heath ha ad f ca ca ha d gae tha f
the t̄ fd g f t̄e a ha ad , uch a t̄c a t c
f . He e é , a hfa ca affect e de a ea a d
ca e ad a caue a d t̄l t̄ a g .

Med ca e ce ca e ect a a ea e the u b e f
ate t th e t̄at̄ a de e t̄ d a ga daft a a
a hfa e e t (ee IVHHN glde e ad ce t̄ the ed ca
c u t).



2. What are the effects of ash on health?

Effect fa h. heath a bed ded t e éa categé :
¶e nat¶ effect , e e t , ¶tat ad d¶ect
effect .

2.1 Respiratory effects

I s e éut , a h átce ca be f e that the áte
breathed dee t the ug . W th h ghe áe, e e heath
d dia e éece che t d c f¶t th áea ed
cugh g a d ¶tat . G acute (h¶t-té)
t c ide:

- ❖ Na a ¶tat a d d chage ¶l e e).
- ❖ Th at ¶tat a d ¶t et at, et e
acc a ed b d cugh g.
- ❖ Pe e th ¶e-e t gche t c a t a de e
e éelb chtc t hch a t e da be d
e t a h(f e a e, hac g cugh, d uct
f ltu , hee g, ¶h t e f breath).
- ❖ A a ¶tat f ¶e e tha th a ¶b cht ;
c a t f e e tha th a c ide
h t e f breath, hee g a d cugh g.
- ❖ Breath gbec e l e f ¶tab e.

4

I ¶te cícu ta ce , g-té e t f e ca ca h
a ead t e lu ug d ea e . E the ed ea e t cc , the
a h ut be á f e, c ta á ta e ca (f the d ea e
c t cc) a d the e e ut be e ed t the a h
h gh c ce ¶nat a é a ea . E t á ta e

ca - ca ca h t ca - f h̄t dñat (da † ee),
a d t ñde ugge t that the ñec e ded e - ñe t
(ñ - t c lñe) ca be e ceeded f̄ h̄t ñe d - f
t eff the ge ña - lat .

P e e lffé g ñ a th a - th ñ ug ñ be uch a
b̄ ch t a de h e a, a d e ñe he ñt ñ be ñe - t
atñ .

Why are people with chronic lung problems at special risk?

The feah ñtce ñtate the
añ a ad caue the t
c ñact, a g ñreath g -ne
diffcut e e h añead ha e
ug ñbe . The feadu a
caue the g f the añ a t
ñduce ñe eñet hñch ca
caue e et c lñg a d ñreath
ñe hea . A th a lffé ,
e eca ch ñe h a be
he a e ed t the a h he
the a , a lffé b lt - f c lñg g, tght e - f the che t
a d hee g. S e e e h ha e e ñ - g had
a th a be ñe, a e ñe cea th a t f - ga
a hfa , e eca f the g - lñd ñ the a had ñ-e ñt
the e e .





What factors affect respiratory symptoms?

The de e t ffe t at t n the ha at f ca cah de d a u b ffact . The e cude the ce t at f atce the a , the t at ff e atce the a h, the ne le c addat fe , the ee ce f ta e ca ad ca cga e aed th the a h, a d ete gca c dt . E t g heath c dt a d the ne ffe t at t ect e e u et a f ue the t e e ced.



2.2 Eye symptoms

Eye irritation affects health effects and can cause a fluent scratch. The first of the eye (conjunctiva) is a direct contact. Gauze tact is easily seen to be affected by the eye. Eye irritation can also affect the conjunctiva.

Gauze tact conclude:

- ☒ Eye feels gradually through the affected area.
- ☒ Eye becomes fluent,itchy,burnt.
- ☒ Sudden change in tearing.
- ☒ Gauze abrasion or scratch.
- ☒ Acute contact with the fingers of the affected area that leads to the eyeball swelling, headache, redness, burning of the eyes, and heat.



2.3 Skin Irritation

Wh e + t e - , - ca c a h ca ca le e e e e ea fthea h ac d c. **¶ tat f**

S t c ide:

☒ ¶ tat a d'edde g f the .

☒ Sec dafect drieatch g.

2.4 Indirect health effects of ashfall

A e a the h'it ad g te he th , d'ect act f a'ge a hfa he th ut a be c de'd.

The e a a e the ec da c e le ce fa hfa , f'e a e:

☒ Effects on roads

The redact b t f a'b'ea ha e a ca le acc de t. Th da ge c u ded b a h c e g ad. N t a e ad a g c ed u , but th a e fe th et i d a h a e e , , redic g nact . Th c de t fah a a e ad a abe, cutt g ff c u te f ba cu e .



❖ Effects on power

A hfa ca ead t .
cut. The e a ha e
cat. f health due
t ac f heat g
the na tuctia
e u te et that de ed
e ect. Weta h
c duct e, t e eta
that afe eat g
cedne ate n ge t f ed he cea g
e u e u e t.

❖ Effects on water supplies

A hfa ca cae e ta at f até gg g
adda age f até u e u e t. S a , e
até u e uchad etc até ta th f
na ageáee eca u éabet ca ca hfa ,
adee a latte fah a caue be
f tab t. Wh e the ft ct , the H
a be reduced ch at h b ted. D g a d
afté a hfa , the a e t bee na até
de a df cea -u , e ut g até h tage .

- ❖ Effects on sanitation (a te ate d a etc).
The te d abe e t f u c a a tat
te a ead t ea ed d ea e affected ea .
- ❖ Risk of roof collapse
 - 1) R f ca e a e
f the e ght fa h,
e nt g n
death f th e
d eath.
 - 2) Th e a da g f
f c a e h t
ce a g a h f f
d e t the ea ed
ad fa e a a ahead ea aded f.
 - 3) I e ea e nt e e ha ed ed af fa g
f the f he ea g u a h.
- ❖ Animal health
 - If the a h c ated
h d f c ac d,
the a h ca be e
t ct g a g
a a f the
ge t a h c e ed
g a a d .



3. What to do to protect yourself against ash

✗ Limit driving

I edate afte a a hfa , ee a ght e, d g c dt , b t a da la t ca be d a at ca affected, e eca b the u e fa h b taff c. Ra fa ha a udde butte . a effect g a i a t ut the a h d e ut aga . We tec e d that, f g a a hfa , u efa f g a d ta d f b e. If u l u t d e, a ta a a g e d ta ce f the eh c e f t f u a d d e .

✗ Reduce ash in your house

Kee a d a d d c ed he e e b e.

✗ Protection

The u deta g ce a - u a t h u d a a ea effect edut a (ee IVHHN Rec e ded Ma d cu e t a t . hh g). If a ed a a a abe, a fab c a f ed f c th f t a t the a g e a h a t c e h ch a c b u t t h a t a de e t a t . Da e g the fab c th at e t effect e e . Pe e th ch c b u c h t , e h e a a t h a a t ad ed t ta de a da d u ece a e a t a h .

✗ Eye protection

I f e-a h e f e t , e a g g e f c fect e e g a e tead f c tact e e t f tect e e f t a t .



❖ Drinking water

Afté ght a hfa t uia afe t d até c ta ated tha h, but t better t f té ff the a h átce befé d g. H e é, a h áea e the ché e ée lne et d fected áface- c ected até hch, théf ée, ca be á b gca u afe t d . A h uia a e d g até u aatab e (á, eta c á b tté- ta t g) befé t ée et a heath . The afe t a t e áe á e -be g t t c u até á á t the e e t. G ecte ugh d g até f at ea t a ee (u t ega , 3-4 ée, é é é da). If lne c ect gá até, c é the ta add c ect a d e befé a hfa ccá .



❖ Home-grown food

A h-c ed egetab e g fed ate afet eat
aft a h g th cea ate.

❖ Clean-up

L ght ate d the a h de t bef ie the ate
e ed b h e g, be g cnefu tte ce e
et the de t f, car ge ce ad gad
da g f a e. D h g ca dce e hgh
e e ee ad h u d be a ded. H gue
age latte f ate a d a caue ate
h tage hea - uated area .

4. Precautions for children

Chidre face the a e ha ád f the u e - fa ha
- the age g u , but the e - dre a be área ed because
the dre h ca a ád dre e e t ad t
reas abe, tude t, teet e ea dre t a du ece á
e ádet a h. Whee de ce ugge t that get - f a
adut - fa h - tha and u , eíec ed that - u ta e
thef - g Recaut :

- ☒ Kee chidre d -
f - b e.
- ☒ Chidre h u d be
ad ed aga t
tue u a -
t u g he a h
the a , ce
e át - ead t
he a ábreath g,
dra g a átce - eedee t the u g .
- ☒ G u t e hea a hfa área a h t
- g a e da -cáe - g a t nee áte t f - cea -
u ta .
- ☒ If chidre u t be u t d - he a h - eet the
a , the h u d eá a a (referab - e a - ed
b IVHHN). Ma a , h e e , áde de g ed t ft
adut - gathé tha chidre .
- ☒ Take átca ác aet - eet chidre a g
área he a h - dee - the g u d - ed u .

5. Sources and further information

The Interim at a Volcanic Health Network (IVHHN) was founded in 2003, and aims to facilitate health effects of volcanic eruptions. It is based on a guide developed by the International Federation of Volcanology and Geochemistry, which is available online (<http://www.ifv.org/volcanoes/health/>).

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) website provides information on volcanic ashfall health hazards, a fact sheet on how to clean up ash, and a guide called 'Ashfall: how to be prepared for an ashfall'. USGS Cascade Volcano Observatory, Vancouver, Washington, November 1999.

The guide based on the following source:

Residents' guide to the state of the Soufriere Hills volcano following the scientific assessment of July 1998 and the dangers of volcanic ash, with tips for cleaning up ash. Edgecombe Directorate, St. John, Montserrat, Wednesday, August 1998.

Volcanic ashfall: how to be prepared for an ashfall. USGS Cascade Volcano Observatory, Vancouver, Washington, November 1999.

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Preventive health measures in volcanic eruptions. B.P.J. Battaglia, Academic Press, London, 1984-90, 1986.



Acknowledgements

The development of the software IVHHN is funded by the Natural Environment Research Council, UK, the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom, UK, and gratefully acknowledged by the lead author. The IVHHN gratefully thanks the following people for their support:

- Dr Bob Mair, Department of Health, London, UK;
- Steve Bratt, USGS Hawaiian Observatory, Hawaii, USA;
- Dr Phil Webster, School of Radiation Health, University of Aukland, New Zealand;
- Dr David J. Holt, GNS Science, Lower Hutt, New Zealand;
- Scott Bainbridge, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand;
- Dr Cath Steart, Wellington, New Zealand.

A lot of effort has been put into the software by the following people:



Notes



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