

# NASA postpones Mars 'flying saucer' test on Earth

June 12 2014

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In this undated image provided by NASA a saucer-shaped test vehicle holding equipment for landing large payloads on Mars is shown in the Missile Assembly Building at the US Navy's Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, Hawaii. On Wednesday, June 11, 2014 weather permitting, a balloon carrying the saucer-shaped vehicle is set to launch from Hawaii. (AP Photo/NASA)

Bad weather is preventing NASA from launching a "flying saucer" into

Earth's atmosphere to test technology that could be used to land on Mars.

The [space agency](#) postponed a launch Wednesday and later scrubbed a scheduled Saturday attempt. It was to test a disc-shaped vehicle and giant parachute off the Hawaiian island of Kauai under atmospheric conditions similar to Mars.

For decades, NASA has depended on the same parachute design to slow spacecraft after they enter the Martian atmosphere. But it needs a larger and stronger parachute if it wants to land heavier objects and astronauts.

Mission managers are deciding their next move, including possibly extending the two-week test flight window that began last Tuesday. NASA has invested \$150 million in the mission and any extension would cost money.

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Citation: NASA postpones Mars 'flying saucer' test on Earth (2014, June 12) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-06-nasa-postpones-mars-saucer-earth.html>

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