

Tourists evacuated amid Iceland volcano concerns

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This is a Saturday May 8 2010 file image taken from video of a column of ash rising from Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano. It was reported Tuesday Aug. 19, 2014 that thousands of small intense earthquakes are rocking Iceland amid concerns that one of the country's volcanoes may be close to erupting. Iceland has raised its aviation alert level for the risk of a possible volcanic eruption to orange _ the second-most severe level. The alert is worrisome because of the chaos that followed the April 2010 eruption of Eyjafjallajökull, when more than 100,000 flights were cancelled because volcanic ash floating in the atmosphere is considered an aviation safety hazard. (AP Photo/ APTN)

Authorities have evacuated tourists from an area north of Iceland's largest glacier amid increased seismic activity around a volcano in the past few days.

Iceland's Civil Protection Department says 300-500 people, mostly visitors, have been evacuated from the highlands north of the Vatnajökull glacier. The area is uninhabited, but popular with hikers in the summer.

Officials said Wednesday the measure was taken as a [safety precaution](#) following thousands of small earthquakes in recent days near Bardarbunga, a subglacial stratovolcano under the glacier. Roads in the area have been closed amid fears that an eruption could lead to serious flooding.

The prospect of a [volcano eruption](#) is worrisome because of the international aviation chaos that followed the 2010 eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano, when more than 100,000 flights were cancelled.

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