

Guatemala's Fuego volcano becoming more active: officials

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Ash billowing from the Fuego volcano is seen from the Palin municipality, Escuintla departament, 40 km south of Guatemala City on February 13, 2015

Guatemala's Fuego volcano is becoming more active, belching out increasing amounts of smoke and ash, officials said on Friday.

Fearing a full-blown eruption of the volcano, located just 50 kilometers (30 miles) from the capital of Guatemala City, disaster officials warned

that aircraft should exercise caution when flying over Fuego.

Conred, the national disaster coordination agency, said the volcano's eruptions could range in intensity from weak to moderate, and that columns of ash could reach 4,500 meters (15,000 feet) above [sea level](#).

Authorities also warned that wind-borne ash particles could travel as far as 12 kilometers from the volcano, possibly causing respiratory and other [health problems](#) for some Guatemalans.

Fuego, which translates to "fire" in Spanish, measures more than 3,700 meters and is located in southwestern Guatemala on the borders of Chimaltenango, Escuintla and Sacatepequez departments.

Officials said for the moment there is no need to prepare for evacuations, but will continue to monitor the volcano since the situation could change quickly.

Fuego reawakened earlier this year, raining soot and ash on adjacent towns and forcing the temporary closure of a nearby airport.

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