

Hawaii volcano destroys dozens of homes, forces evacuations

May 7 2018, by Caleb Jones, Jennifer Peltz And Sophia Yan



This Sunday, May 6, 2018, image from a research camera mounted in the observation tower at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory and provided by the U.S. Geological Survey, shows the summit of the Kilauea volcano on the Big Island of Hawaii. The camera is looking south southeast towards the active vent in Halema'uma'u, 1.9 km (1.2 miles) from the webcam. For scale, the crater wall of Halema'uma'u behind the eruptive vent is about 85-meters (about 280-feet) high. Lava shooting out of openings in the ground have already destroyed nearly half a dozen homes while some 1,700 people who evacuated the area face the possibility of not being able to return for a long time. (U.S. Geological Survey

via AP)

Hawaii's Kilauea volcano destroyed 26 homes and spewed lava hundreds of feet into the air, leaving evacuated residents unsure how long they might be displaced.

In revised figures Sunday, Hawaii County officials said another four unspecified structures were covered by lava.

Hawaii officials said the decimated homes were in the Leilani Estates subdivision, where molten rock, toxic gas and steam have been bursting through openings in the ground created by the volcano.

Some of the more than 1,700 residents who have been evacuated were allowed to briefly return to gather medicine, pets, and other necessities.

Officials say residents would be able to do so each day until further notice as authorities monitor which areas are safe.

Amber Makuakane Kane, 37, a teacher and single mother of two, said her three-bedroom house in Leilani Estates was destroyed by lava.

The dwelling was across from a fissure that opened Friday, when "there was some steam rising from all parts of the yard, but everything looked fine," Makuakane said.

On Saturday, she received alerts from her security system that motion sensors throughout the house had been triggered. She later confirmed that lava had covered her property.



In this Saturday, May 5, 2018 photo, a new fissure erupts in Leilani Estates in Pahoehoe, Hawaii. Hawaii's erupting Kilauea volcano has destroyed homes and forced the evacuations of more than a thousand people. (U.S. Geological Survey via AP)

Makuakane grew up in the area and lived in her house for nine years. Her parents also live in Leilani Estates.

"The volcano and the lava—it's always been a part of my life," she said. "It's devastating ... but I've come to terms with it."

Lava has spread around 387,500 square feet (36,000 square meters) surrounding the most active fissure, though the rate of movement is slow. There was no indication when the lava might stop or how far it might spread.

"There's more magma in the system to be erupted. As long as that supply is there, the eruption will continue," U.S. Geological Survey volcanologist Wendy Stovall said.



Cherie McArthur and Michael McGuire, who live in the mandatory evacuation zone near Kilauea volcano, talk at a shelter in Pahoa, Hawaii on Sunday, May 6, 2018. Officials on Hawaii's Big Island say what started out as a small spattering of lava from the ground Saturday night only took minutes to become cascading fountains. U.S. Geological Survey volcanologist Wendy Stovall says lava fountains spewed as high as 230 feet (70 meters) into the air only 15 minutes after the initial eruption from a the latest of several new fissures in the area. (AP Photo/Haven Daley)

Cherie McArthur wondered what would become of her macadamia nut

farm in Lanipuna Gardens, another evacuated neighborhood near Leilani Estates. One of the year's first harvests had been planned for this weekend.

"If we lose our farm, we don't know where we're going to go. You lose your income and you lose your home at the same time," said McArthur, who's had the farm for about 20 years. "All you can do is pray and hope and try to get all the information you can."

About 250 people and 90 pets spent Saturday night at shelters, the American Red Cross said.

The number of lava-venting fissures in the neighborhood grew overnight from eight to as many as 10, Stovall said, though some have quieted at various points. Regardless, USGS scientists expect fissures to keep spewing.



Steve Clapper, who lives in the Leilani Estates subdivision where the first lava erupted right behind his home, talks to a reporter at a shelter in Pahoa, Hawaii on Sunday, May 6, 2018. Officials on Hawaii's Big Island say what started out as a small spattering of lava from the ground Saturday night only took minutes to become cascading fountains. U.S. Geological Survey volcanologist Wendy Stovall says lava fountains spewed as high as 230 feet (70 meters) into the air only 15 minutes after the initial eruption from a the latest of several new fissures in the area. (AP Photo/Haven Daley)

The lava could eventually be channeled to one powerful vent while others go dormant, as has happened in some previous Hawaii eruptions, Stovall said.

Kilauea (pronounced kill-ah-WAY'-ah), one of the world's most active volcanoes, has been erupting continuously since 1983.

The USGS's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory issued a notice in mid-April that there were signs of pressure building in underground magma, and a new vent could form on the cone or along what's known as the East Rift Zone. Leilani Estates sits along the zone.

The crater floor began to collapse Monday, triggering earthquakes and pushing lava into new underground chambers that carried it toward Leilani Estates and nearby communities. A magnitude-6.9 earthquake—Hawaii's largest in more than 40 years—hit the area Friday.



A line of traffic is seen going towards Pahoa town, Sunday, May 6, 2018, near Pahoa, Hawaii. Scientists reported lava spewing more than 200 feet (61 meters) into the air in Hawaii's recent Kilauea volcanic eruption, and some of the more than 1,700 people who evacuated prepared for the possibility they may not return for quite some time. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)

It set Michael McGuire's car rocking in his driveway, knocking things off his shelves and shattering glass in his cabinets near Leilani Estates.

He hoped to check on his home Sunday but realized it was too soon to be sure when, or if, it would be safe from the moving lava.

"I'm somewhat fatalistic: if it happens, it happens," he said. "And I'm enjoying life here, so you know, you put up with a lot of things here. This is one of them."

Noah and Laura Dawn own a retreat center about 3 miles downhill from

the most active vents They were clearing out items Sunday and relocating up the coast indefinitely.

"We're just removing all things of value to us and precious things because I have the feeling it could get real - real, real fast," Noah Dawn said.



Cherie McArthur and Michael McGuire, who live in the mandatory evacuation zone near Kilauea volcano, talk at a shelter in Pahoa, Hawaii on Sunday, May 6, 2018. Officials on Hawaii's Big Island say what started out as a small spattering of lava from the ground Saturday night only took minutes to become cascading fountains. U.S. Geological Survey volcanologist Wendy Stovall says lava fountains spewed as high as 230 feet (70 meters) into the air only 15 minutes after the initial eruption from a the latest of several new fissures in the area. (AP Photo/Haven Daley)



Lava glows from a vent on a lava bed at the Leilani Estates, Saturday, May 5, 2018, in Pahoa, Hawaii. The Hawaiian Volcanoes Observatory said eight volcanic vents opened in the Big Island residential neighborhood of Leilani Estates since Thursday. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



Lava burns across the road in the Leilani Estates in Pahoehoe, Hawaii, Saturday, May 5, 2018. Hundreds of anxious residents on the Big Island of Hawaii hunkered down Saturday for what could be weeks or months of upheaval as the dangers from an erupting Kilauea volcano continued to grow. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



Fumes come out of cracks on the asphalt road near the Leilani Estates in Pahoa, Hawaii, Saturday, May 5, 2018. Hundreds of anxious residents on the Big Island of Hawaii hunkered down Saturday for what could be weeks or months of upheaval as the dangers from an erupting Kilauea volcano continued to grow. Lava spurted from volcanic vents, toxic gas filled the air and strong earthquakes, including a magnitude 6.9 temblor on Friday, rocked an already jittery population. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



Volcanic fumes closed a road near the Leilani Estates in Pahoehoe, Hawaii, Saturday, May 5, 2018. Hundreds of anxious residents on the Big Island of Hawaii hunkered down Saturday for what could be weeks or months of upheaval as the dangers from an erupting Kilauea volcano continued to grow. Lava spurted from volcanic vents, toxic gas filled the air and strong earthquakes, including a magnitude 6.9 temblor on Friday, rocked an already jittery population. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



Resident Sam Knox, 65, rides his bicycle to the edge of the road as lava burns across the road in the Leilani Estates in Pahoa, Hawaii, Saturday, May 5, 2018. Hundreds of anxious residents on the Big Island of Hawaii hunkered down Saturday for what could be weeks or months of upheaval as the dangers from an erupting Kilauea volcano continued to grow. Lava spurted from volcanic vents, toxic gas filled the air and strong earthquakes, including a magnitude 6.9 temblor on Friday, rocked an already jittery population. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



While wearing an air filter mask, Laura Dawn drives her truck loaded with her possessions as she and her husband flee the lava eruption, Sunday, May 6, 2018, near Pahoa, HI. Their property is just below the active lava eruption and they fear their land will get covered in lava. They are moving further upcoast to a safer area. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)

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