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Mauna Loa Has Erupted; Lava Currently Confined to Summit Area with No Imminent Threat to Communities Downhill; Emergency Management Systems Activated

For Immediate Release: Monday, November 28, 2022

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HONOLULU — At about 11:30 p.m. HST on Sunday, Nov. 27, 2022, Mauna Loa volcano on the Big Island of Hawai'i began erupting.

At this time, the lava is confined to the immediate area of the mountain's summit, and has not begun flowing outside that area. No communities downslope from the caldera are immediately threatened, and about half of all recorded Mauna Loa eruptions have been confined to the summit area.

The United States Geological Survey's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (HVO) has increased the alert level for volcanic activity on Mauna Loa from "advisory" to "warning" with the start of eruption. The volcano has been exhibiting increased seismic activity since September, which prompted scientists to increase monitoring and begin public outreach on the Big Island.

HVO also increased the aviation threat level from "yellow" to "red" to reflect the presence of airborne gases, ash particles and possibly "Pele's hair" volcanic glass fibers. The volcanic particles also prompted the National Weather Service to issue an Ashfall Advisory for the Big Island through 6 a.m. Monday, with a quarter-inch of ash accumulation possible. People with respiratory problems should stay indoors or wear masks or cloths to limit exposure to the particles.

The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) has activated its Emergency Operations Center for enhanced monitoring of the evolving situation and provide any support requested. We are in close communication with Hawai'i County Civil Defense Agency (HCCDA) and HVO, and will provide additional information as the situation evolves. At this time, no evacuation has been ordered.

People living on the Mauna Loa slopes should stay informed through HCCDA alerts and take steps to prepare in the event action is needed. For preparedness information from

Hawai'i County, see these resources: <https://hawaii-county-volcano-hazards-hawaiicountygis.hub.arcgis.com/>

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