

# Quakes damage roads as ash spews from Hawaii volcano

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HONOLULU (AP) — Earthquakes were damaging roads and buildings on Hawaii’s Big Island on Wednesday as ash emissions streamed from Kilauea volcano.

measured as a 4.4-magnitude earthquake.

The floor of the summit crater has also dropped about three feet, as the threat of a strong, explosive eruption at the top of the volcano loomed.

The ground was deflating as the crater’s lava levels fell, causing stress faults around the crater to move, resulting in the earthquakes. More were

wind to several communities, though there were only trace amounts, said the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

Ash plumes on Tuesday had spouted as high as 12,000 feet into the air, scientists said.

These plumes are separate from the lava eruptions happening roughly 40 kilometers away from the summit, where about 20 lava fissures have

Kilauea’s summit crater, which reflect the “most energetic explosions yet observed and could reflect the onset of steam-driven explosive activity,” the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory said in a statement, and continues to monitor activity.

Scientists say earthquakes may shake loose rocks underground and open up new tunnels for lava to flow.

but they have to keep it safe for everybody,” said Ken McGilvray, an area resident. “We live on a volcano!”

Hawaii Gov. David Ige said the state is forming a joint task force that could handle mass evacuations of the Big Island’s Puna district if lava from Kilauea volcano covers major roads and isolates the area.



Photo shows lava spattering from an area between active Fissures 18 and 20 on the lower east rift of the Kilauea volcano, near Pahoa, Hawaii yesterday.

The strongest shaking was recorded around 8:30 a.m., measured as a 4.4-magnitude earthquake.

The floor of the summit crater has also dropped about three feet, as the threat of a strong, explosive eruption at the top of the volcano loomed.

The ground was deflating as the crater’s lava levels fell, causing stress faults around the crater to move, resulting in the earthquakes. More were expected.

Ash spewed from the summit at Hawaii’s Kilauea volcano, though emissions decreased from Tuesday.

There were occasional bursts of ash coming from the crater causing ash to fall downwind to several communities, though there were only trace amounts, said the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

Ash plumes on Tuesday had spouted as high as 12,000 feet into the air, scientists said. These plumes are separate from the lava eruptions happening roughly 40 kilometers away from the summit, where about 20 lava fissures have destroyed more than two dozen homes and forced the evacuation of about 2,000 residents.

Dense, large rocks roughly two feet in diameter were found in a parking lot a few hundred yards away from Kilauea’s summit crater, which reflect the “most energetic explosions yet observed and could reflect the onset of steamdriven explosive activity,” the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory said in a statement, and continues to monitor activity.

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Cracks formed on a highway near the entrance to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, said the Hawaii Police Department. Much of the park remains closed.

“We’re all safe, and I wish they’d open the park back up, but they have to keep it safe for everybody,” said Ken McGilvray, an area resident. “We live on a volcano!”

Hawaii Gov. David Ige said the state is forming a joint task force that could handle mass evacuations of the Big Island’s Puna district if lava from Kilauea volcano covers major roads and isolates the area.