

La Soufrière Volcano



La Soufrière is an active stratovolcano on the highest peak of the Caribbean island, St. Vincent. It has had five explosive eruptions since 1718, with the most recent occurring on April 9, 2021.

How does a La Soufrière eruption impact Barbados?

The eruptions in 1979 and 2021 generated heavy ashfall in Barbados for days which is extremely dangerous for humans and animals. It can also cause minor to major damage to vehicles and buildings, contaminate water supplies, disrupt sewage and electrical systems, and damage or kill vegetation.

Frequently Asked Questions about the La Soufrière Volcano

How long will the eruption last?

The length of the eruption is dependent on the amount of energy in the volcanic system. The eruption will end when there is no longer enough energy to bring material to the surface. Based on previous eruptions, the explosions may last several days to weeks.

Now that ash is in Barbados and St. Lucia, will it also impact other islands?

Yes. Wind may carry ash further away from the volcano with time. Surface or sea-level winds will carry ash west and south to the Grenadines and Grenada. In the upper atmosphere, winds will take ash north and east. Islands like Martinique and Dominica may receive some ash, but the majority will go out into the Atlantic Ocean.

Will the eruption of La Soufrière trigger an eruption at Kick-‘em-Jenny?

No, the volcanoes are not linked. Kick-'em-Jenny is not showing signs of an eruption and no warnings have been issued.

Can lahars or mudflows be generated during this eruption?

Yes. There has been significant ashfall across mainland St. Vincent. With rain, ash deposits will be swept into rivers and streams forming lahars or mudflows. These flows usually have a high temperature and can carry large amounts of volcanic debris.

Have there been any pyroclastic flows?

Pyroclastic flows or pyroclastic density currents (PDCs) are usually caused by the collapse of the eruption column, a dome collapse or a lateral blast. Pyroclastic flows at La Soufrière have been confirmed as of 12/04/21

(Source: UWI Seismic Research Centre)

Respiratory Protection from Volcanic Eruptions and COVID-19

- Respirators and face masks can be effective respiratory protection from volcanic ejections. An important protective measure is to limit exposure to all gases, ash and particles. Respiratory protection is needed during and after an eruption and during clean-up activities.
- Individuals require different types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), outside of respiratory protection. Use goggles or a face shield for eye protection. Long sleeves, pants and gloves will protect the skin from contact with ejections and acid gases. Boots with a thick sole will provide the most protection to the feet.
- Persons who may be exposed to high levels of volcanic emissions due to close proximity or prolonged exposure, such as those who monitor or respond to volcanic activity, are at high risk.
- A half or full-face respirator with the appropriate filter or cartridge or a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) may be indicated.

(Source: Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency)


Tips on how to protect yourself during ashfall



PROTECTING YOURSELF DURING ASHFALL

- Stay inside, if possible, with windows and doors closed.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use goggles to protect your eyes.
- While outdoors or cleaning up ash, use a disposable particulate respirator such as the N-95 mask.


SOURCE: CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION



PROTECTING YOURSELF DURING ASHFALL

- Avoid driving in heavy ashfall which will stir up ash that can clog engines and stall vehicles.
- If you do have to drive, keep the car windows up and do not operate the air conditioning system. Operating the air conditioning system will bring in outside air and ash.



SOURCE: CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION






Tips on how to protect animals from ashfall

- Keep animals indoors
- Wash their face, eye, mouths and backs
- Cover their food and water sources
- Change their food and water before you detect abnormal smells
- Have a backup supply of potable water, medicine and extra food
- Consult your veterinarian for more information




Treating your vehicle during volcanic ashfall




Treating your Vehicle during Volcanic Ashfall



- Avoid driving since volcanic ash makes roads slippery and hinders visibility
- If you must drive, clean the windshield with the wiper, fluid and damp cloth
- Drive with car air filters
- DO NOT use wipers on dry ash, it will scratch your windscreen



- Wash the engine compartment with steam cleaner or a garden hose
- Use compressed air and water to clean the exterior of the car
- When cleaning up, do not brush the ash off the car, the particles will scratch it
- Seal air intakes and electrical components before cleaning



For more information on volcanoes [click here](#) or visit <http://uwiseismic.com/>