

Hawaii volcano eruption: How bad is the collapse explosion at Kilauea volcano's summit?

HAWAII'S Kilauea volcano has been erupting for more than two months and is showing no sign of slowing down. How bad is the collapse explosion at Kilauea volcano's summit?

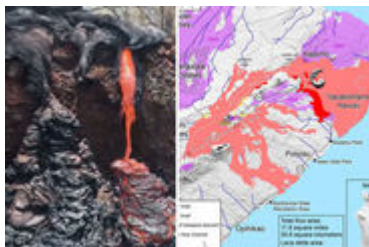
Continued lava flows, earthquakes and slumping caused by Kilauea have devastated Hawaii's Big Island.

Some 6,100 acres have been covered in lava according to the United States Geological Survey, including areas where homes once stood.

The latest official number of houses that have been destroyed since the eruption began was 700, however as the eruption continues this number will continue to rise.

A Civil Defense warning read: "The Hawaiian Volcano Observatory reports that Fissure 8 continues to erupt lava into the perched channel heading northeast from the vent.

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“A flow moving around the west side of Kapoho Cone has proceeded to quarter of a mile to the coast.”

They also warn that lava is spilling over from the channel, causing dangerous streams of molten rock.

“Break outs are occurring from the main channel in Leilani Estates,” the agency added.

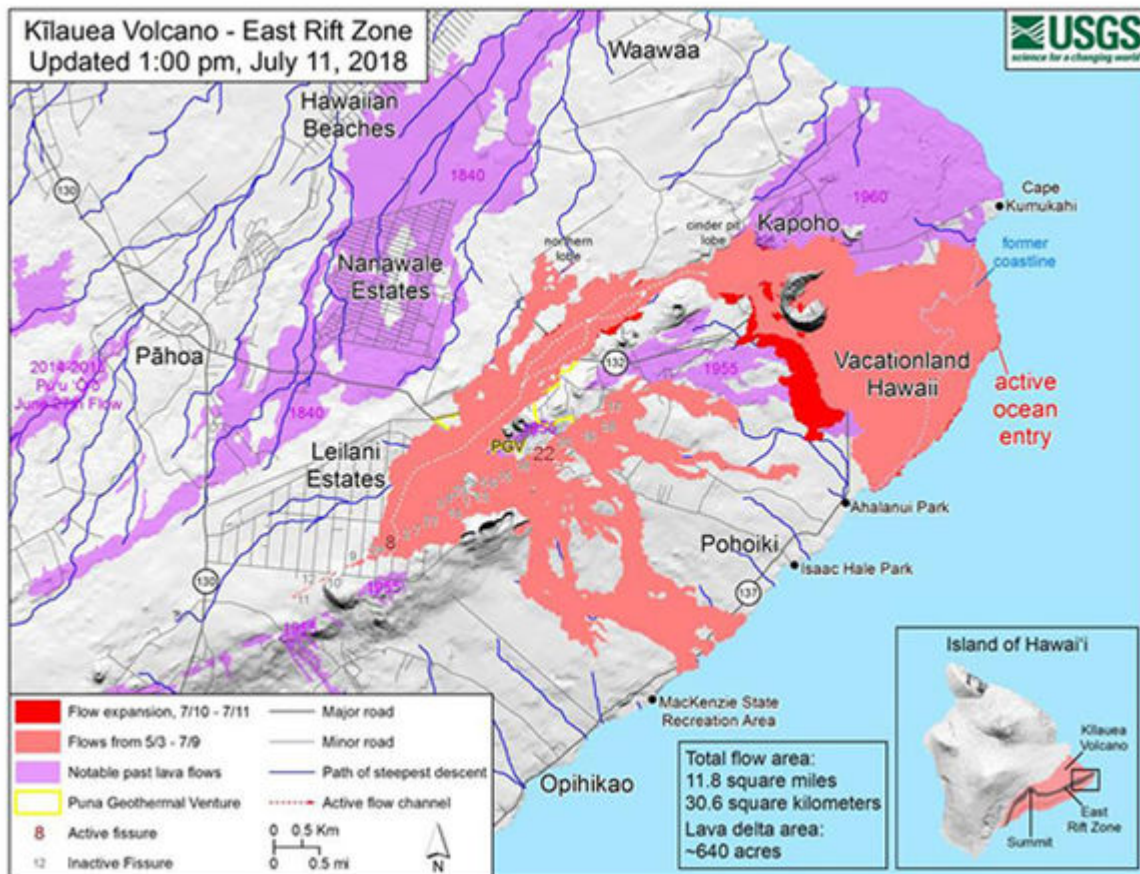
“The United States Geological Survey has confirmed that two homes on Luana St. have been destroyed by the break out and one home on Nohea St. is threatened.

“Be aware that spillovers of the channel and other breakouts are possible on the active flow field, do not access the active flow field due to extreme hazard.”

How bad is the collapse explosion at Kilauea volcano’s summit?

The USGS reported an explosion beneath the summit of Kilauea, occurring at 5.45am local time (4.45pm BST) on Wednesday, July 11.

The scientific agency said “a collapse/explosion occurred beneath Kilauea caldera with energy equivalent to a magnitude-5.3 earthquake.



Hawaii's Kilauea volcano is spewing lava into the ocean.

"The number of earthquakes dropped from 30-40/hr to less than 10/hr.

"We expect the earthquakes to increase over the next day until the next collapse/explosion tomorrow.

"The collapse/explosive event this morning was followed by an increase in lava from the fissure 8 vent which has produced small overflows from the upper channel that are threatening a few homes on Nohea and Luana streets."

There could be larger explosions following this one, following patterns from previous activity in the volcano.



Lava is flowing over the channel and into other streams

As the lava continues to spread, the landscape across Big Island is being changed forever.

The flow from fissure 8 that is entering the ocean has begun to create its own landmass, as the boiling lava meeting the cool ocean solidifies and builds up along the seabed.

This land mass is now 405 acres wide and is highly unstable.

Hawaii County Mayor Harry Kim has extended the state of emergency for at least another 60 days, as scientists remain unable to predict when Kilauea will stop erupting.



Lava has flown from two fissures, fissure 8 and fissure 22

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