

Kilauea volcano eruptions hit geothermal power plant as lava continues to flow



Locals flock to what is now the end of Leilani Avenue to take in the fiery show at fissures 2, 7 and 8 of the Kilauea volcano (Picture: AP)

Lava from the Kilauea volcano covered at least one well Sunday at a geothermal power plant on the Big Island, according to a Hawaii County Civil Defense report.

The well was successfully plugged in anticipation of the lava flow, and a second well 100ft away has also been secured, according to the report.

The plugs protect against the release of gas that could turn toxic when mixed with lava.

The volcano on Hawaii's Big Island is now in its fourth week of eruptions.

The lava breached the property overnight. David Mace, a spokesman for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said the flow started about 200 yards away from the nearest well. But he said safety precautions went into effect before the breach.



The geothermal plant can be seen just to the right of centre of this picture (Picture: EPA)



Continued vigorous low fountaining at fissure 7 is feeding a tremendous amount of volume to lava flows from the kilauea volcano (Picture: EPA)

'I think it's safe to say authorities have been concerned about the flow of lava onto the plant property since the eruption started,' he said. Puna Geothermal, owned by Nevada's Ormat Technologies, was shut down shortly after Kilauea began spewing lava on May 3. The plant harnesses heat and steam from the Earth's core to spin turbines to generate power. A flammable gas called pentane is used as part of the process, though officials earlier this month removed 189,265

litres of the gas from the plant to reduce the chance of explosions. They also capped the 11 wells at the property to try to prevent a breach.



A noticeable increase in volume of lava being produced by this eruption on Kilauea's lower east rift zone (Picture: EPA)



Lava from the Kilauea volcano inches closer to the back of a home on Nohea Street in the Leilani Estates (Picture: Reuters)



Hannique Ruder looks at a shard of lava rock she picked up at the flow near Nohea Street in the Leilani Estates (Picture: Reuters)

Before the lava reached the well, plant spokesman Mike Kaleikini told the news agency Hawaii News Now that there was no indication of the release of the poisonous gas hydrogen sulfide – the greatest fear should lava hit the wells. 'As long as conditions are safe, we will have personnel on site,' Kaleikini said. 'Primary concern is sulphur dioxide from the eruption and lava coming on site. We monitor for hydrogen sulphide and sulphur dioxide on a continuous basis.' Steve Brantley of the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory said the flow seemed to have halted Sunday morning before it picked back up and covered the well at the plant, which lies on the southeast flank of the volcano, nestled between residential neighbourhoods. Lava-filled fissures have torn apart chunks of the southeastern side of the Big Island over the past three weeks as Kilauea has become more active.



Two existing ocean entries are still active, fed by fissure 22, but have slowed substantially (Picture: EPA)



Members of the Hawaii National Guard Public Affairs Team monitoring the press as they cover the activity at fissure number seven (Picture: EPA)



Dozens of people have lost their homes as a result of the volcanic eruptions (Picture: EPA)

Haze from the Kilauea volcano eruption in Hawaii blanketed the Marshall Islands

2,300 miles) away on Sunday, as officials warned it would continue moving west.

The haze, a phenomenon known as 'vog' or volcanic smog, 'is spreading across Micronesia,' the US National Weather Service based in Guam said.

Meteorologists advised residents on the Marshall Islands with respiratory problems to stay indoors while airlines and shipping companies were warned to be aware of 'lower visibilities'.

The Guam weather office said haze produced by Kilauea would spread farther westward and reach Kosrae, Pohnpei and possibly Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia over the next few days.



Steve Brantley of the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory said the flow seemed to have halted Sunday morning before it picked back up and covered the well at the plant (Picture: EPA)



Huge parts of the island are unrecognizable after the eruptions (Picture: AP)



Several residents of Leilani Estates watch fountaining at fissure 7 from the bed of an abandoned vehicle in their friend's backyard (Picture: EPA)

Kilauea is the world's most active volcano and one of five on Hawaii's Big Island.

It started erupting on May 3, prompting about 2,000 people to flee from their mountainside homes.

Scientists believe the volcanic activity may be a precursor to a major eruption similar to the one that shook the island in the mid-1920s.

Source: <https://metro.co.uk/2018/05/28/kilauea-volcano-eruptions-hit-geothermal-power-plant-lava-continues-flow-7582816/>

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