

Eruption of volcano prompts evacuations

by UPI

HONOLULU -- A rare eruption of Hawaii's Kilauea Volcano has prompted the closing of Volcanoes National Park and an evacuation advisory for those living nearby. Officials took the action fearing a shift in winds from the southeast would scatter sulfur dioxide gas from the eruption into the park, KITV, Honolulu, reports. Earlier Tuesday state and county officials issued an evacuation advisory for some 2,200 Big Island residents living near the volcano. Kilauea Volcano has been belching ash and gas into a number of towns in the area for several weeks, KITV said. An explosion on the crater's rim blew debris over a 75-mile area several days before the ash and gas eruption began. Officials have been warning residents to stock up on emergency items like dust masks. Sulfur dioxide can be especially harmful to people with respiratory problems.

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