

Mount Redoubt volcano erupts twice

by UPI

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- Alaska's Mount Redoubt volcano erupted twice Thursday, sending a black cloud of ash over the Kenai Peninsula.

Officials said commercial airlines were halted nearly all flights in south-central Alaska.

Following an initial blast at 8:34 a.m., a huge explosion 50 minutes later sent ash soaring 65,000 feet above sea level, The Anchorage Daily News reported.

Alaska Airlines canceled all flights in and out of Anchorage for the rest of the day. Other airlines canceled or diverted flights as well.

The newspaper reported that U.S. Weather Service released an ashfall advisory to aviators for an area that encompassed all of the Kenai Peninsula and parts of Prince William Sound -- as well as a portion of a major air route from Seattle to Anchorage.

Anchorage International Airport remained officially open.

No ash was expected to fall on Anchorage but late in the day a "faint trace" was reported outside the Alaska Volcano Observatory on the Alaska Pacific University campus, the Daily News said.

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