

ASH ALERT!

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY, HOME, AND BUSINESS

The Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Island, Kenai Peninsula, and Cook Inlet areas are the most likely to be covered with volcanic ash, which is actually pulverized rock from the volcanic explosion.

Fresh volcanic ash may be harsh, acidic, gritty, and smell like sulphur. Heavy ashfall may reduce sunlight, causing a sudden demand and possibly brownouts of electrical power. Ash can clog watercourses, sewage plants, and all kinds of machinery. A one-inch layer of ash weighs ten pounds per square foot, and fine ash is extremely slippery, hampering both driving and walking.

Ash can also damage the lungs of small infants, the very old and infirm, or those already suffering from respiratory illnesses.

Prepare ahead of time.

Checklist

Home

- ___ NIOSH-approved dust/mist respirators (coded TC-21C-XXX). Some will not fit children; check before buying.
- ___ Non-perishable food for two weeks
- ___ Water (1.5 gal/day/person) in clean plastic containers
- ___ Medicines and first aid kit
- ___ Battery operated radio and extra batteries
- ___ Extra pet food if applicable
- ___ Fire extinguisher

Auto

- ___ Dust/mist respirators
- ___ Glasses to replace contact lenses
- ___ Blankets
- ___ Fire extinguisher
- ___ Extra clothing
- ___ Emergency food ration
- ___ First aid kit and critical medication
- ___ Flashlight, extra batteries and bulbs
- ___ Basic tool kit
- ___ Portable radio and extra batteries
- ___ Shovel
- ___ Matches, candles, emergency flares
- ___ Heavy rope or tow cable
- ___ Extra air filter
- ___ Extra windshield washer fluid
- ___ Extra windshield wiper blades

Workplace

- ___ Large plastic bags to protect office equipment
- ___ Critical personal medication

Home Preparation

Store additional water if your water supply is vulnerable to power outages or contamination. Maintain a home emergency kit (see checklist).

During an Ashfall

- Stay indoors if possible.
- Close doors, windows, and dampers.
- Avoid burning woodstoves or fireplaces.
- Eliminate draft sources.
- Do not run exhaust fans or clothes dryers.
- Listen to your radio.
- Vacuum furniture, carpets, etc., and try not to wipe, as ash will scratch.
- Laundry-brush, shake, and presoak clothes. Use plenty of water and detergent; do not use soap as it tends to gum up.
- If you have been working in ashfall, have your work clothes laundered at work or outside the home.
- Cover and don't use personal computers, stereos, and other sensitive equipment.

After an Ashfall

- Wear a respirator during ash cleanup.
- Consider using goggles for eye protection.
- Remove heavy accumulations of ash from flat or low-pitched roofs and from rain gutters.
- When sweeping, dampen or sprinkle ash with "Industrial Sweep" to avoid raising unnecessary dust.
- Mow lawns when damp and bag lawn clippings to reduce dust.
- Replace items used from the emergency kit.



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Family Preparation

Instruct family on emergency and safety procedures. Have quiet games and activities available. Consider organizing a community day care center to help working parents during ashfall clean-up and to keep children in a cleaner environment. Plan for sheltering pets and livestock.

During an Ashfall

- Stay indoors if possible.
- Keep children indoors.
- Minimize exertion to reduce inhaling ash.
- Do not attempt to pick your children up at school, unless directed to do so. Schools will be notified of emergency procedures to take.
- As much as possible, maintain normal routines for children.
- Use respirators if outdoors.
- If ashfall is prolonged, take children outside as weather conditions permit (use dust/mist respirators).
- If a person with heart or lung disease should experience symptoms, they should consult their physician.
- Use the telephone for emergencies only.
- Keep pets indoors as much as possible.
- Tightly restrict the outdoor movement of pets or livestock to reduce inhaling ash.
- Get clean water to livestock as soon as possible.
- If pets go out, brush or vacuum them before letting them back inside. Do not let them get wet or try to wash them.
- Keep extra dry and clean pet food available.

After an Ashfall

- Limit outdoor activities of children and pets until ash dust is no longer evident.

Auto Preparation

Maintain an auto emergency kit (see Checklist). Insure windshield wiper blades are in good condition.

During an Ashfall

- Do not drive unless absolutely necessary.
- If you must drive, drive slowly. Do not follow the car ahead too closely. Ash is slippery.
- Use your windshield washer system anytime you must use your wipers.
- Do not drive without an air filter.
- Change your air filter if you notice a loss of power in your car's engine.
- If car stalls, push it off the road to avoid collisions, and then stay inside the auto.

After an Ashfall

- Change oil and oil filter.
- Change air filter.
- Wash you car thoroughly with water to remove all ash.
- Replace any item used from the auto emergency kit.

Workplace Preparation

Become familiar with your employer's emergency plans. Encourage employers to have an early release policy to allow employees to get home before an ashfall occurs. Maintain a workplace emergency kit.

During an Ashfall

- Don't operate non-essential equipment.
- Protect office equipment such as copiers, fax machines, and personal computers as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Store computer diskettes inside sealed bags or containers.
- Go home, if possible, before ash begins to fall.
- If ash is already falling heavily, stay, or go indoors until the ash has stopped and settled.
- If it is not possible to go indoors, get into your car and go directly home.

After an Ashfall

- Clean up all ash before removing protective covers from office equipment.
- Replace items used from the emergency kit.

