

# ASH ALERT!

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Mt. Redoubt

**HOW TO PROTECT  
YOUR FAMILY, HOME,  
AND BUSINESS**

*More than half of all  
Alaskans can be affected  
by volcanoes.*

*Since 1700, at least 41 volcanoes  
in Alaska have erupted, some of  
these as many as 25 times.*

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.

