

Scientists Use Web Site to Report Volcano Activity



Many people use the Internet every day to check the local news and weather. In Alaska, however, some people are checking the Web to find out if a nearby volcano is about to erupt!

In recent months, one Alaska volcano has been more active than usual. Small eruptions started in January at the volcano known as Augustine. Some of those eruptions blew dust on nearby towns.

When the volcano activity started, scientists made a special Web page. They are using the Web page to report the volcano's activity to people who live nearby. If Augustine is erupting dust, people will know that they should close their windows or wear masks when they go out. Dust from a volcano can harm people's lungs. If Augustine starts exploding, people will need to leave the area.

People in Alaska aren't the only ones who have been visiting the Augustine Web page. People around the world have been sending questions to the scientists.

NEWS WORD BOX

eruption observing
activity behaving

Is Augustine getting ready to erupt again? No one knows for sure. The last time Augustine had a large eruption was in 1986. Scientists will keep observing the volcano. They are using cameras and space satellites to observe its activity too. The scientists will use their Web page to let people know how the volcano is behaving.

You can see what's going on at Augustine too. Just go to the scientists' Web page at <http://www.avo.alaska.edu/>.

MORE FACTS ABOUT ALASKA HURRICANES

- Alaska has more than 100 volcanoes. About 40 of them are "active" ones.
- When volcanoes erupt, besides pushing out dust, steam, and rocks, they also can push out very hot, liquid rock called *lava*.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

If you were to send a question to scientists in Alaska, what would you want to know about volcanoes?