

ASH FALLS

What to do **BEFORE** an ash fall:

- Store water in big containers and keep these sealed or sheltered/covered.
- Make sure you have extra food.
- Make sure you have extra firewood or fuel for cooking.
- Make sure you have a supply of medication available.
- Ensure you have a piece of cloth and eye protection. Avoid using contact lenses.
- A torch and many extra batteries.
- A radio and many extra batteries.
- Keep all doors and windows closed whenever possible and seal with cloth.
- Cover tanks/well and disconnect down-pipes immediately before or as ash is starting to fall. Do this even if you have a first flush system.



What to do **DURING** an ash fall:

- Do not panic.
- Stay indoors.
- If you are outdoors, seek shelter in a strong house.
- Put on dust mask or cloth over nose and mouth.
- Wear eye protection if you are outdoors and long sleeves, pants, hat and shoes.
- Keep children indoors and discourage playing in the ash.
- If warning is given on ash fall, go home from work.
- Listen to the radio for information on eruption.
- Wash plants before consumption.
- If there is ash in your water, let it settle or filter it, then use the clear water for everything but not drinking if possible.



What to do **AFTER** an ash fall:

- Wear eye protection and use mask or cloth over your nose and mouth when removing volcanic ash from the house.
- If there is a large ash deposit (several cm or more) on your roof (not just millimeters) and rain has not been able to wash it off, dampen ash and remove by shoveling. Be careful this can be dangerous and you could fall. Use only a small amount of water to avoid excess loading on the roof.
- Once the next good (enough) clean rainfall starts wait 30 minutes then-reconnect the tank/well. Wait 30 minutes even with a first flush installed.
- Use great caution when climbing ladder or roof (ash deposits make surfaces more slippery and cause excess loading when you are standing on an already heavy-loaded roof)
- You may eat fruits and vegetables from the garden, but wash them thoroughly first.



For more information, please contact the Geohazards Division within the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department at geohazards@meteo.gov.vu and 24686 or consult the website www.vmgd.gov.vu

VOLCANIC HAZARDS

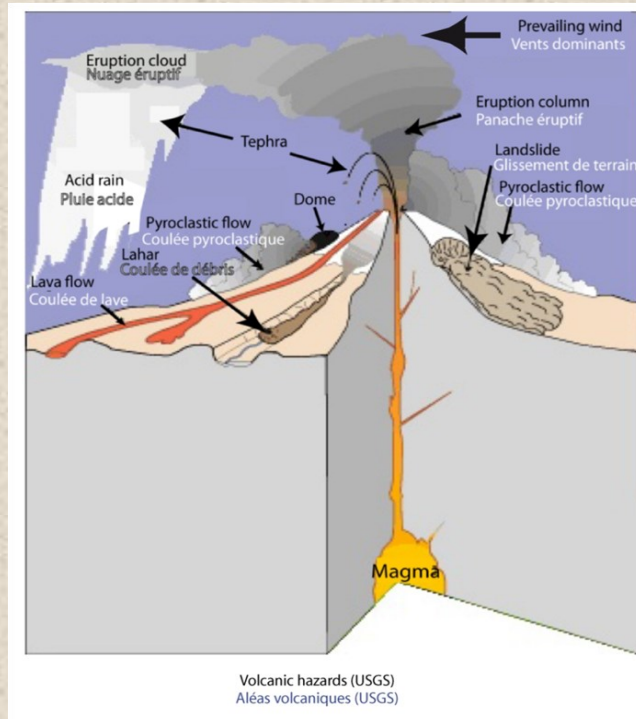
Volcanic Ash fall or Tephra

Volcanic Ashes are the most common type of hazards in Vanuatu. Gaua, Ambae, Ambrym, Lopevi and Tanna volcanoes are well known for this type of hazards. Ash is being thrown out of the volcano and carried by the wind to other surrounding areas. This can be very dangerous as the ash particles are so small that they are breathed in without knowing and can increase respiratory illnesses. Ash can destroy houses, gardens and affect peoples health; Ash can increase coughing, red-eye, skin conditions. Seek advice from your local health facility. Maintain use of water for all WASH and hygiene needs-even if water smells or tastes bad from ash or is cloudy, it is still good but not for drinking or cooking rice.



Lava Flow

When magma rises up inside a volcano conduit it can flow outside a volcano or also come from a flank vent causing destruction to everything that is in its pathway. The lava flow on Ambrym in 1951 caused people to relocate to other islands nearby.



Pyroclastic Flow

During a large eruption hot rocks, gases and ashes from volcanoes often flow very fast (>100 km/h), down the sides of the volcano burning and destroying everything in its path.

Mudflow or Lahar

Often hot ash mixes with rain water or rivers causing mudflows or lahars which can flow along creeks or valleys and destroy everything in its pathway.

Lava Bombs

Hot magma is often thrown out of the volcanic crater when it is still very hot and as it cools it solidifies. It is very dangerous to stand few kilometers near the volcano that ejects lava bombs. Some bombs can be as big as a truck!

Volcanic Gases

Volcanoes emit certain gases including water vapor, carbon dioxide and sulphur dioxide. Sulphur gas smells like rotten eggs or burnt matches and can affect the health of people when breathed in. Food that is affected by a chemical from the volcano called fluoride can also cause Dental Fluorosis if people continue to eat it over a long period of time.



Acid Rain

Acid rain is caused when acid gas from a volcano mixes with the water particles in clouds and condenses as acid rain. Acid rain damages gardens and food crops, water and affects the health of communities and roof-collected water supplies.

