

Long Time Mainsaver Customer Puna Geothermal Shut Down from Volcanic Eruption

Puna HI., and San Diego, CA., June 6, 2018, *via USA Today and pictures via Robert Hanashiro, USA TODAY*



The plant has been shut down, and tens of thousands of gallons of flammable gas stored at the site have been removed.

County, state and federal authorities are monitoring the flow and working with the power plant "to ensure the safety of the surrounding communities," the county civil defense agency said in a statement. It added that nearby residents should be prepared to leave the area with little notice because of gas or lava inundation.

"This situation will be closely monitored," the statement said. "There is no immediate threat to any of the wells at PGV."

PGV is a geothermal energy conversion plant that extracts steam and hot liquid from underground wells. The liquid, or brine, is not used for electricity, but the steam is directed to a

turbine generator that produces electricity. Even the exhaust steam from the turbine is used to heat fluid to drive a second turbine, generating more power.

The electricity generated by PGV is sold to Hawaii Electric Light.

Authorities also are contending with another threat as molten rock from Kilauea finds its way to the ocean: laze. Laze forms when 2,000-degree lava hits the cooler seawater. A hydrochloric acid steam cloud billows into the air, along with fine particles of glass.

Pictures and News reprinted from USA Today and pictures via Robert Hanashiro, USA Today.