

Erupting Volcano Blankets Kamchatka Villages in Ash

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Shiveluch volcano viewed from space, July 2007

An ash cloud from the erupting Shiveluch volcano is spreading over the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia's Far East covering several local villages in ash and disrupting local aviation services, a news report said Thursday.

Showers of ash were reported in the village of Klyuchi in the Ust-Kamchatsky district forcing authorities to distribute gas masks among residents, Interfax said.

Local residents said that the streets are covered with a layer of ash and that there is a strong smell of sulphur in the air. The village is located 47 kilometers away from the volcano.

The plume of ash, spewed into the air by the Shiveluch volcano Thursday morning, reached a height of 10 kilometers above sea level.

All public facilities in the village continue to function despite the ashfall, while local

firefighters and rescuers are sending out text messages warning people to stay inside.

The Emergency Situations Ministry's local office said the lives of local residents were not in danger.

The ash cloud is spreading to the southwest threatening to reach more settlements in the Ust-Kamchatsky and Milkovsky districts. Residents have already been warned by the ministry, Interfax said.

Shiveluch's eruption may also affect the work of local airlines. The presence of ash particles in the air, which can be potentially harmful to aircraft engines, forced local authorities to declare a code red level of danger.

Shiveluch is one of the biggest active volcanos in the Kamchatka Peninsula region. It has an area of 1,300 square kilometers and a height of 3,283 meters above sea level.

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