

How does living near a volcano impact people's lives?

Living near a volcano hugely impacts people's lives in many ways. The destructive properties of volcanoes are obvious and there is no doubt that they can cause major disruption and for this reason are the cause 540 deaths annually. The main threat a volcano poses, to those in close proximity, is the consequences of a possible eruption taking place. The possible repercussions of an eruption will undoubtedly have a huge effect on not only those near the volcano but also those in other areas. However, some people argue that the benefits of living near a volcano outweigh the risk of an eruption taking place.

Today around 500 million people choose to live on or near a volcano for several reasons. The ash produced from a volcanic eruption is rich in nutrients and acts as a great fertilizer allowing the land nearby to be ideal for farming and growing crops. This means farmers can get a higher crop yield allowing them to earn more money. Volcanoes also provide geothermal energy for locals meaning that they have a renewable energy source. Tourists also come to visit the volcano allowing the local economy to flourish.

However, when a volcanic eruption occurs, ash is ejected out of the volcano, which contains bits of debris and if it settles on buildings, can cause roofs to collapse. Pyroclastic flows and lahars can wipe out entire cities and kill thousands, economic activity can suffer as a result of this. Tourism also sees a decline as tourists fear another eruption taking place. This leaves cities around volcanoes in ruins and means people living in those areas have a difficult time for the next few years. This illustrates the profound effects volcanoes have on people's lives.

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