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'Understanding volcanoes and society: the key for risk mitigation'



Impacts of the 2011 Puyehue-Cordon caulle eruption in Villa La Angostura, Argentina

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On 4 July 2011, Villa La Angostura (Argentina) was covered by tephra coming from Cordón Caulle volcano. Thanks to the timely alert levels raised by the Chilean Geological Survey, Local Civil Protection was able to activate the emergency plan c.72 hours before the onset of the eruption, coordinating with the Disasters Emergency Committee the steps to follow. Contrary to our former feelings, the people always kept calm, stocking up on supplies in an orderly way and being willing and caring for others. A few hours after the onset of the climactic phase, up to 40 cm of tephra fell in the town, collapsing the basic services and foreseeing a daunting social panorama. It was then thought that the city itself would not be recovered in less than 8 years but surprisingly it took only 6 months, where 110,000 trucks were necessary in order to remove up to 1.5 mega tons of tephra from the urban area. Amongst our pending issues is to better coordinate the scientific, civil protection and government areas.