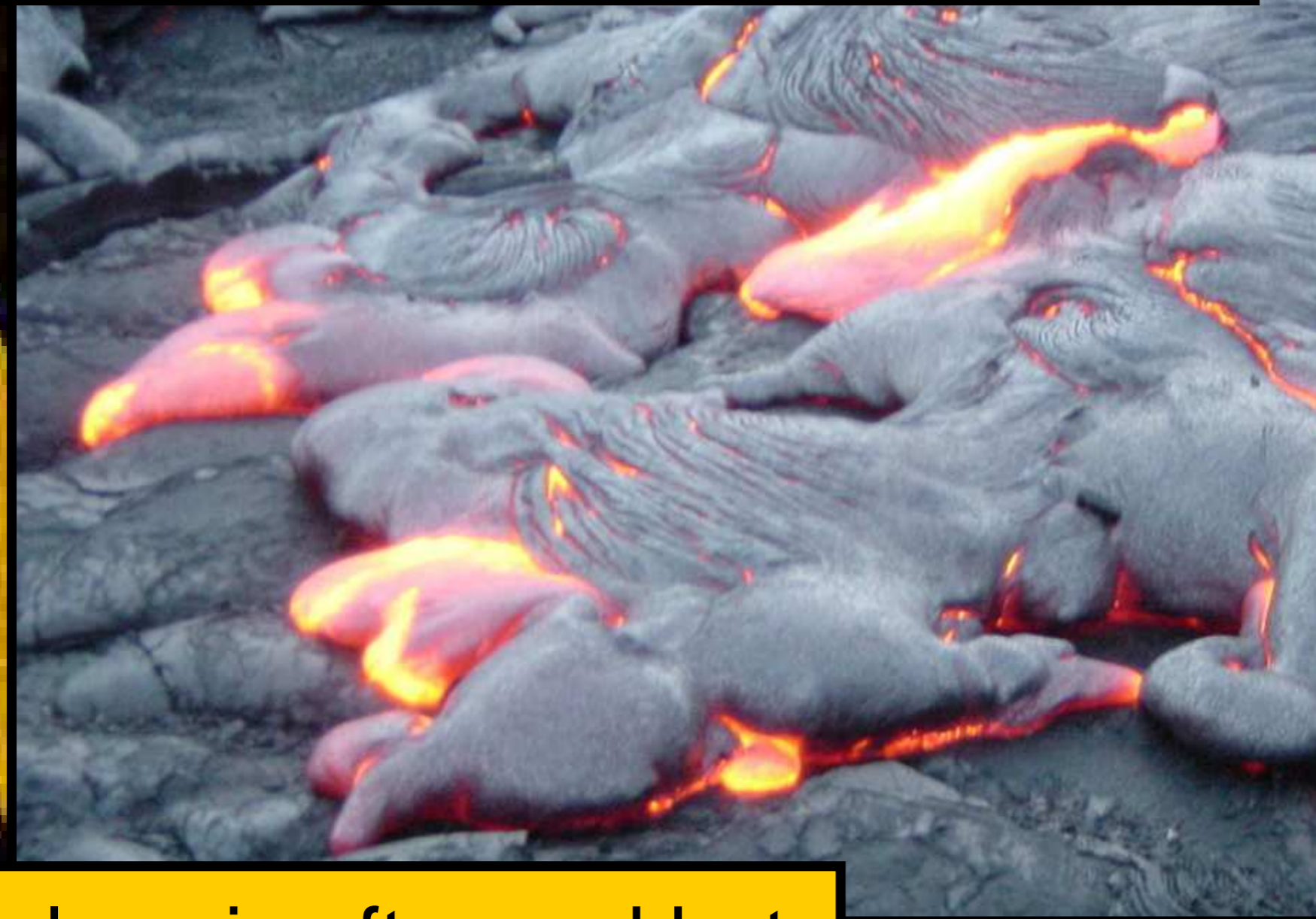


Volcanic Hazards: Lava

The most common type of lava is called **basalt** lava. It erupts as a liquid that can flow above the ground, or in tunnels just under the surface.

Poster © Jeannie Scott / NERC



Molten rock is called **magma** before it erupts, and **lava** after it erupts.



This lava is often red hot – it can be over 1000°C. It forms a dark skin or crust as it cools. This crust can wrinkle, but it is often very smooth and glassy. It has a Hawaiian name – **pahoehoe lava** (pronounced pah-ho-ee-ho-ee).



Michelle Parks

Lava tunnels can have very thin roofs. You would not want to fall through one of these!

If basalt lava has a lot of gas dissolved in it when it erupts, it can be full of bubbles. This makes it less runny, and it has a rough, sharp surface. It is called **a'a lava** (pronounced ah-ah).



Lava flows do not move fast – you can get very close to them, if you don't mind the heat. But they destroy buildings and crops. And they seriously disrupt traffic!



Science Photo Library



usaamateurtraveler.com

USGS