In Skyrim, the magic is a very cool effect. Not only is it deadly, but it also dynamically effects the lighting in the scene. It also bounces off things like walls and characters and other geometry. It clearly changes the color of some pixels as it spreads across almost like a very fast cellular automata. The effect to lighting must be done by counting it as in area light pixel in a ray tracing algorithm. That way the glow is achieved on the other textures in the scene.

Here you can see that the effect also produces things like smoke, done by physics simulations in the ray tracer.