

# FEMA Provides Tips on How to Plan Ahead For the Aug. 21 Solar Eclipse

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WASHINGTON – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) continues to offer safety tips ahead of the August 21, 2017 eclipse, which will be the first total solar eclipse in the continental United States in 38 years.

A partial eclipse can be seen anywhere in the nation; however, the *path of totality* (where the moon will block view of the sun completely) will stretch from Salem, Oregon to Charleston, South Carolina and will attract a surge of visitors from around the globe over the next few days.

With increased traffic and the ever-present possibility of weather events, residents and visitors are advised to follow preparedness and safety guidance they receive from state, local, and tribal authorities.

FEMA's Regional Response Coordination Centers in Bothell, Washington, Denver, Colorado, Kansas City, Missouri, and Chicago, Illinois, will be activated at an Enhanced Watch or Reporting level to assist our state, local, and tribal partners in maintaining situational awareness throughout the event. FEMA liaison officers are deployed to state emergency operations centers in several states to assist with communication, planning and operational readiness. Mobile Emergency Response Support teams are strategically located in the event that communications support may be requested.

Much of the eclipse's path of totality lies in rural areas, with sometimes minimal infrastructure and support. Challenges for eclipse viewers are expected to include:

- Heavy to gridlocked traffic conditions before and after the eclipse;
- Travelers stopped on roadways (heat, water, food, bathroom challenges);
- Distracted driving during the event;
- Limited cell phone service due to heightened network use; and
- Potentially limited gasoline availability because of increase in travelers.



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Page 1 of 2

Other simple safety tips include:

- Have a [family communication plan](#) when attending any large gathering, to ensure you know where to meet up if you get separated from friends or family.
- Monitor the weather; download the [FEMA App](#) (available in English and Spanish) to receive weather alerts for areas you'll be visiting.
- Bring extra gas, food and water for the trip.
- Drink plenty of water – even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Bring plenty of sunscreen and mosquito repellent; and
- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
- Remember, the only way to safely view a solar eclipse is to do so using specially constructed “eclipse glasses.”

Visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for more safety tips, and for help creating a family communication plan. For more on how to view the eclipse safely, see [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov).

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Page 2 of 2