



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health And Safety Tips For The Eclipse

Looking at the sun when it is partially eclipsed is unsafe

SPRINGFIELD – On Monday, August 21, 2017, a solar eclipse will be visible across the entire U.S. The last total solar eclipse seen coast to coast in the U.S. was in 1918. Starting shortly before noon and lasting until 2:45 p.m. central time, people in Illinois can see the moon pass in front of the sun. There is a 70-mile wide path across the country called the [path of totality](#), which is when the sun will be completely blocked by the moon. Parts of southern Illinois are in the path of totality and people there will see a total eclipse. Totality in Carbondale and the immediate surrounding area will last approximately 2 minutes and 40 seconds. Central and northern Illinois will see varying degrees of the partial eclipse with decreasing magnitude further north. More information about the path of the eclipse and how long it will last can be found at <https://eclipse.aas.org/>.

Looking directly at the sun is unsafe except during the brief phase when the moon entirely eclipses the sun. The only safe way to look directly at the uneclipsed or partially eclipsed sun is through special-purpose solar filters, such as eclipse glasses or hand-held solar viewers.

“Looking at the sun without eclipse glasses or solar viewers can cause ‘eclipse blindness’ or retinal burns,” said Illinois Department of Public Health Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. “Homemade filters or ordinary sunglasses, even very dark ones, are not safe for looking at the sun.”

To date, four manufacturers have certified that their eclipse glasses and handheld solar viewers meet the ISO 12312-2 international standard for such products: Rainbow Symphony, American Paper Optics, Thousand Oaks Optical, and TSE 17. More information about eclipse glasses and solar viewers can be found under resources on the American Astronomical Society website at <https://eclipse.aas.org/resources/solar-filters>.

If you’re planning to spend the day outside and turn the eclipse viewing into an event, keep in mind sun and heat safety.

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SUN AND HEAT – while outside, guard against sunburn and heat illness.

- Never leave anyone, including pets, alone in a closed, parked vehicle
- Apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher 30 minutes before going outside
- Increase fluid intake - drink more liquid than thirst indicates; avoid alcohol and caffeine
- Be aware of heat exhaustion. Symptoms include heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea, clammy skin, pale or flushed complexion, and fast and shallow breathing
 - If present, be sure to move the person to a cooler place, remove or loosen tight clothing, apply cool, wet cloths, and give cool water to slowly drink
- Be aware of heat stroke. Symptoms include hot, dry or wet skin, hallucinations, chills, throbbing headache, high body temperature, confusion/dizziness, and slurred speech
 - If present, call 911; quickly cool the person in a cool bath or wrap wet sheets around them; if the victim refuses water, is vomiting, or shows a decreased level of consciousness, do not give anything to eat or drink

TICKS AND MOSQUITOES – If you're camping or in the woods or open space to see the eclipse, watch out for insect bites. Mosquitoes can transmit West Nile virus and ticks can transmit Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Ehrlichiosis, and other serious diseases.

- Wear insect repellent. Apply insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR 3535, according to label instructions
- Check for ticks, both people and pets, every 2 to 3 hours
- Remove ticks attached to the body promptly to help prevent diseases. Use tweezers to remove the tick and call a health care provider if a rash, fever, or body aches develop during the 1 to 3 weeks following a bite.

For more information about summer safety, check out our [“Summer? No Sweat. A Summer Survival Guide”](#) at www.dph.illinois.gov.

For information about road conditions, traffic, and camping, check out www.ready.illinois.gov. For additional information about eye safety, we suggest contacting an optometrist.

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