

2017 Total Solar Eclipse

Union County Emergency Services is working with several agencies to help ensure that visitors and travelers have a safe and positive experience during the total solar eclipse on August 21, 2017.

The eclipse will arc across Oregon all the way to the southeastern coast of South Carolina, and beyond. Oregon Museum of Science & Industry estimates that this first total solar eclipse in 38 years to cross the continental United States will attract millions of spectators.

While exact numbers (and even solid estimates) are very difficult to obtain, emergency managers across the state are planning for an influx of about one million visitors into Oregon for several days on either side of the eclipse. Since August is already prime vacation season in many areas of the state, expect nearly everything to be above capacity for nearly a week total.

Suggestions for VISITORS:

- Be prepared for crowds, lines and traffic. Be patient. Bring books, games, etc., to keep busy; Take the time in long lines to get to know Oregonians and other visitors via lively conversation. It's a good time to learn about Oregon and other areas from which guests are visiting, and to make friends from around the state/country/world.
- Have snacks, water and first-aid supplies on hand in case crowds/lines/traffic become paramount.
- Become aware of the beauty, splendor and hazards that are all part of Oregon. Know what to do and where to go in the event of severe heat, wildfires, earthquakes and other natural disasters.
- Have an emergency kit and an emergency plan; make sure family members or friends back home know your schedule, when you are expected to return and your plan if something happens.

Suggestions for BUSINESS OWNERS AND RESIDENTS:

- Prepare for an influx of visitors. Grocery stores, gas stations, hotels, restaurants, transportation services, coffee shops, retail stores, urgent care clinics and many other establishments may experience a jump in business.
- Be aware that many visitors may be camping in both authorized and unauthorized locations; expect customers who may be primarily interested in using rest rooms.
- Make sure to have a full tank of gas prior to the time visitors begin to arrive in the area. Lines for fuel may occur.
- Businesses should be prepared for more cash transactions and potential challenges with credit/debit card transactions taking longer than usual because of increased volumes. Consider having tills set up to accommodate more cash transactions.
- Be prepared for cell service overloads; there may be service disruptions due to the increase in visitors using networks. Visitors may have urgent requests to use your business telephone line if they are having trouble with cell service. Decide how you want to handle these requests and make sure employees know what to do.
- Business owners should talk to suppliers. Some suppliers may be considering delivery schedule changes due to the event(s). Suppliers may also be looking at how the increased traffic on rural roads may impact delivery times.

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