

Countdown to Solar Eclipse 2017

Oregon is one of the best places to view the rare total solar eclipse

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THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Oregonians across the state are making plans to view the total solar eclipse on Monday, August 21. State leaders, meanwhile, are preparing to host as many as 1 million visitors from outside. Officials are warning of massive traffic delays, crowded accommodations and a high risk of wildfires.

The path of totality, where the eclipse's effects can be fully viewed, will begin in Lincoln City and travel inland across the state, stretching over Salem, Madras, and John Day. The eclipse will be partially visible, however, in the Portland Metro area.

The eclipse will begin at 9:05 a.m. in Lincoln City and Salem, and the skies will continue to darken until totality is reached at 10:18 a.m. The eclipse will end at 11:41 a.m. In eastern cities, such as John Day, the eclipse will reach totality



A rare glimpse of a total solar eclipse happens next Monday.

as much as six minutes later.

Health experts say that the eclipse should not be viewed with the naked eye. Looking directly at the sun, even when it is obscured, could cause temporary blindness and permanent eye damage. Specially certified eclipse glasses are currently being sold throughout the state.

During totality, the eclipse can be viewed with the naked eye. Totality will last for less than two minutes throughout the state, and will not be visible in the Portland region. Finding specially produced eclipse glasses is the best way to prevent injury and enjoy the astral event.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) says that

commuters and eclipse viewers alike should plan for three days of traffic backups, and advise against travelling on the day of the eclipse itself. ODOT also warns that big-rigs and other interstate transports will still be on the roads, and may exacerbate delays.

Events will be held for the eclipse throughout the state, in-

cluding a three-day celebration at the State Capitol in Salem. The Salem Philharmonic Orchestra will be performing a special eclipse concert on the Capitol grounds, and Rose City Astronomer President Margaret Mcree will be narrating the eclipse as it occurs. All events at the Oregon State Capitol will be admission-free.

Eclipse Cancels Activities

Portland Community College will close and Meals on Wheels People will close its dining centers and suspend Meals on Wheels delivery on Monday, Aug. 21, because of the potential of driving hazards during the solar eclipse.

All classes, activities and services at PCC campus will be cancelled for the day and evening due to the possible safety risks associated with the anticipated influx of people and traffic into the Portland region to view the solar eclipse, college officials announced Friday.

For Wheels on Meals, all homebound clients will receive a frozen meal this Friday, Aug. 18, that can be heated and eaten on Monday, officials said.

"We want to ensure the safety of both our clients and our volunteers," said Meals on Wheels People Executive Director Suzanne Washington. "The total solar eclipse will cause dusk-like conditions between 10 a.m. and noon at the time when all Meals on Wheels deliveries are made and our senior diners are coming into the centers. Because of anticipated traffic issues and a high volume of tourists, the roads may be hazardous to navigate. Any senior diner who needs a meal on Monday will receive a frozen meal to take home on Friday."

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