

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Travelers encouraged to plan ahead and travel safely during solar eclipse

On Aug. 21, a total solar eclipse will occur as the moon passes directly in front of the sun, darkening the sky. With increased traffic anticipated across the state as people travel to view the eclipse, the Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas Turnpike Authority, and Kansas Highway Patrol advise travelers to plan ahead and enjoy the eclipse safely.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, approximately 200 million people live within driving distance of the eclipse's path of totality. While only the northeast corner of the state will be in the path of totality for the solar eclipse, the rest of Kansas will still experience part of the astronomical event.

With an increase in traffic and travel time expected, travelers should be patient, avoid distractions, and practice safe driving habits.

"We understand the excitement around the solar eclipse, and we encourage Kansans and our travelers to enjoy this rare opportunity. We do, however, want you to remain safe as you take the opportunity to witness this occurrence," said Lt. Adam Winters, KHP public information officer.

Travelers across the state are encouraged to follow these tips to drive safely on the day of the eclipse:

- Allow plenty of travel time to reach a safe place for viewing, as roads may be congested due to increased traffic.
- Do not take photos or wear the eclipse sunglasses when driving.

- Do not pull over to the side of the highway to view the solar eclipse. Find a location off the highway and right-of-way to observe and/or take photos.
- If you are driving during the eclipse, turn on your headlights and do not rely on your automatic headlights.
- Expect the unexpected: watch out for other drivers and pedestrians.
- Plan ahead for fuel needs and always remember to keep your gas tank full during long trips.

It is also important to be prepared in case of emergencies and create a travel safety kit. Some items to consider for a travel kit may include:

- Non-perishable foods
- Water
- A first-aid kit and any prescription medications needed
- Motor oil
- Antifreeze
- Fuel
- Jumper cables
- Brake fluid
- Windshield washer fluid
- A map

Check the weather and plan accordingly – make sure to dress properly and be fully prepared for potential weather incidents when driving long distances. For information on road conditions, check out www.kandrive.org or call 5-1-1 in Kansas or 1-866-511-KDOT (5368) in the U.S.

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This information can be made available in alternative accessible formats upon request. For information about obtaining an alternative format, contact the KDOT Office of Public Affairs, 700 SW Harrison St., 2nd Fl West, Topeka, KS 66603-3754 or phone 785-296-3585 (Voice)/Hearing Impaired – 711.

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