



June 2023



UPCOMING SOLAR ECLIPSES: LET'S GET PREPARED FREDERICKSBURG & GILLESPIE COUNTY

Two solar eclipses will come through the great state of Texas within a six-month time frame. This is a rare and exceptional circumstance which will consequently make Texas a magnet for potentially several million visitors from across the United States.

On Saturday, October 14, 2023, an annular solar eclipse will cross over portions of Texas. The Sun will appear as a "ring of fire" around the moon. During the annular eclipse, it is never safe to look directly at the Sun without specialized eye protection designed for solar viewing.

Following the annular eclipse, a total solar eclipse will take place on Monday, April 8, 2024. The Moon will pass between the Sun and the Earth, causing a complete block of the face of the Sun. The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk, and Fredericksburg will experience a total eclipse for approximately 4 minutes and 24 seconds. Eclipse viewers should never look directly at the Sun without appropriate eye protection except during totality. This will be the last total solar eclipse visible from the contiguous United States until 2044.

We want you to be prepared! The City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County have created an Eclipse Task Force to prepare for the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse that will take place on April 8th, 2024. Extensive research has gone into preparing for this event including gathering information from cities affected by the 2017 total eclipse.

One of the most challenging planning aspects is determining how many people may visit Fredericksburg and the Hill Country for this event. Central Texas is considered one of the premier locations to view the eclipse due to our historically low cloud cover, combined with our already robust tourism industry.

With the potential for a large influx of crowds, we encourage all businesses and organizations to become familiar with the upcoming eclipse dates and begin preparing accordingly. Please review the following page to see how your business or organization can prepare for the upcoming eclipses.

Official Eclipse Website:
www.eclipseinfbgtx.com

Questions?
Email: eclipse@fbgtx.org

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:

- **Back-up Plans:** Prepare for a potential increase in customers; have needed supplies on hand and early; consider extending hours of operation to meet customer needs and have back-up plans if staff is delayed due to traffic.
- **Employee Preparedness:** Encourage employees to have a full tank of gas; have their own resources ready at home; day care needs met, etc., by Thursday, April 4, 2023. Gas stations may be very busy or may be waiting on resupply. Make sure your staff can get to work, so give them reminders to plan ahead.
- **Cash / Financial Transactions:** Be prepared for more cash transactions; consider having extra tills set up to accommodate more cash transactions. You may have larger than normal deposits over the weekend. Check ahead of time if your bank will be open on Monday, April 8, 2024.
 - **HOW DOES YOUR CREDIT / DEBIT CARD MACHINE ACCESS THE INTERNET?** If you use cell service/cell wireless service for your transactions, be prepared with a back-up plan. We anticipate a high demand for cellular service during the impact period, especially Monday, April 8, 2024. You may find you are not able to make transactions; have a back-up plan to meet your customers' needs.
- **Communications:** Anticipate possible cellular service disruptions due to the increased demand. Visitors may have urgent requests to use your landline business phone if cell service is limited; decide how you want to handle these requests and make sure employees know what to do. If it is a 911 emergency and you have a landline, be ready to help!
- **Regularly Scheduled Deliveries & Product:** Evaluate when you receive your regular deliveries; deliveries scheduled for Monday, April 8, 2024, may be significantly delayed due to the overwhelming number of vehicles trying to come in to and leave Gillespie County. Consider rescheduling for Tuesday or order extra the week prior. Will you have enough product on hand should an influx of customers utilize your services?
- **Restrooms:** Be aware many visitors will be camping in authorized and potentially unauthorized locations; expect customers who may be primarily interested in using business restrooms. Public restrooms will be in short supply and port-a-potties in limited locations may be at capacity until serviced.
- **Weather and Your Business:** If conditions are foggy or cloudy, visitors with hotel reservations will most likely not change their plans, but the "day trippers" may move to a location with better viewing conditions; there is no way to predict this, but monitoring the weather forecast the week to 10 days prior to April 8, 2024, will be useful for your business.
- **Eye Safety:** Determine if you will provide solar filters or glasses for employees and/or customers? If yes, order them as soon as possible to make sure you receive them in time.
- Sign up for the Chamber of Commerce **Solar Eclipse Business Planning Guide** at <https://www.fredericksburg-texas.com/solar-eclipse>
- **Town Hall Meetings:** Attend a community Town Hall Meeting to hear updated information on the planning process. Harper Community Park on Tuesday, June 27, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. and Stonewall Chamber of Commerce on Thursday, July 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. Additional information is available on the official website.
- **Visit and review the official eclipse website at:** www.eclipseinfbgtx.com
 - If you have general information to share on the website regarding your business's modified hours or closure during the eclipse event, please email: eclipse@fbgtx.org



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