



# Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Highways Project Implementation / Bureau of Local Roads & Streets  
2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Room 205 / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

February 26, 2024

## **CIRCULAR LETTER 2024-07**

### **CATEGORY: INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

### **SOLAR ECLIPSE – APRIL 8, 2024**

COUNTY ENGINEERS / SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS / MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS / PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTORS / MAYORS / METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS – DIRECTORS / TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS / CONSULTING ENGINEERS

#### **PURPOSE:**

This Circular Letter is provided for the purposes of providing information, coordination, and communication to all our Local Public Agency transportation partners across the State on the upcoming Solar Eclipse, which will occur on **Monday, April 8, 2024**.

The eclipse will be viewable and have impacts throughout the entire State of Illinois, ranging from a total eclipse throughout most of the geographical areas in Districts 7, 8, and 9 - to an approximate 90% blockage of the sun in the northwest corner of the State. Importantly, the entire state will experience significant blockage of the sun's light during this eclipse, which may impact traffic immediately prior to, during, and immediately after the event.

The purpose of this Informational Item is to provide information on the timing and pathway of this occurrence, as well as items and tips that you may want to institute to manage traffic, ensure safe viewing, and provide measures to ensure safety of the public.

#### **ECLIPSE PATHWAY AND TIMING INFORMATION:**

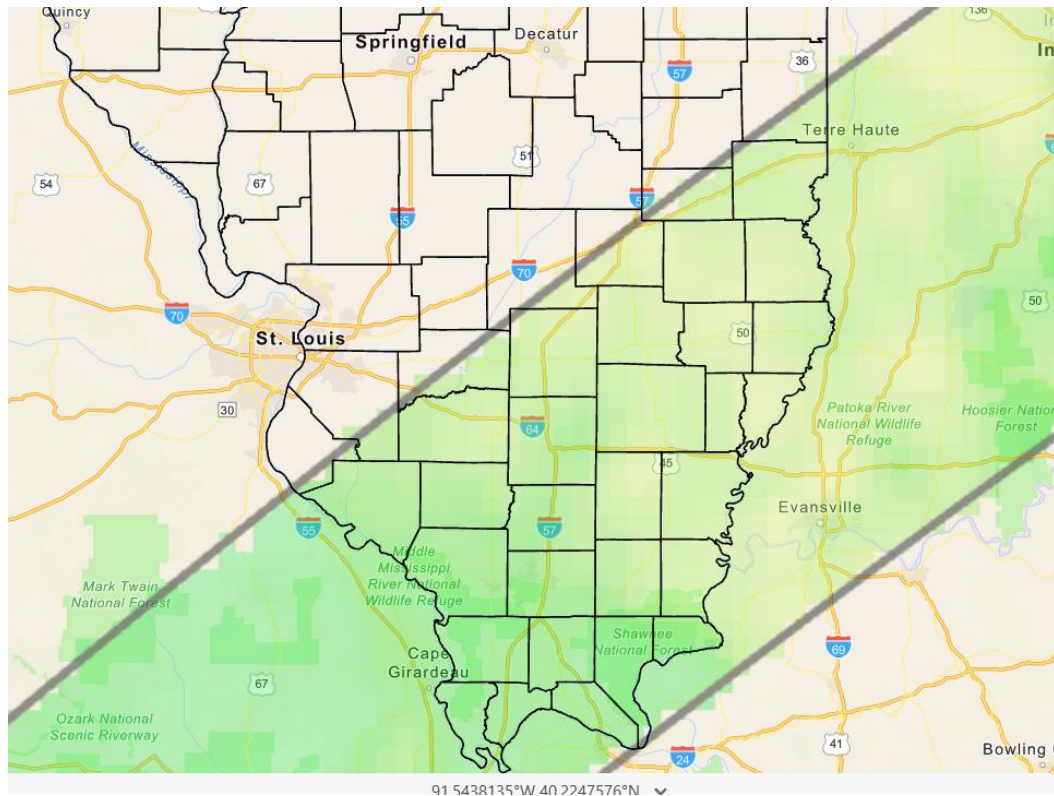
The following websites are provided to you and your officials to gain specific information in your geographical area, to assist in evaluating the timing, duration, and potential impact you may expect in your area on April 8th. Select the April 8<sup>th</sup> Eclipse in the first link:

<https://www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/in/>

<https://wgntv.com/eclipse-2024/illinois-eclipse-map-which-cities-will-have-the-best-view/>

Please understand that even with this event happening in April, while clouds and weather may impact viewing, even with cloud coverage, the overall level of darkness will be significant during the peak period of the eclipse. The reaction of motorists could be quite varied.

This following map indicates the path where a total eclipse will occur, and will be the area with the longest duration, and potential traffic impacts. Understand that in addition to this "arc" a great many other areas will experience impacts such as motorists that stop their vehicles and pull off the side of the road, as well as a duration of near complete darkness not normal to a typical day.



***Figure 1: Total Eclipse Arc***

For reference, it is anticipated the total eclipse will enter Illinois at approximately 1:59pm and will last approximately 4 mins. Here is the time the full eclipse will begin in some of the cities of the highest impact, the start time of the total eclipse is as follows:

- Carbondale – 1:59 CDT
- Marion – 1:59 CDT
- Makanda – 1:59 CDT
- Murphysboro – 1:59 CDT
- Du Quoin – 1:59 CDT
- McLeansboro – 2:00 CDT
- Albion – 2:01 CDT
- Mt. Vernon/Salem – 2:01 CDT
- Lawrenceville – 2:02 CDT
- Greenup – 2:03 CDT

In addition to the above, please note that the duration is double the amount of time of the eclipse in 2017, which was a noteworthy and a significant event. The April 8<sup>th</sup> eclipse is starkly different from 2017, as this is a total solar eclipse. The expectation is this eclipse will appear to be “dark/night” for 4 mins and there will also be solar flares (streaks of light behind the moon) in the zone shown on the map above.

**ECLIPSE PLANNING & CONSIDERATION TIPS:**

While each jurisdiction will need to plan for this event individually, this will need to be assessed based on its needs, location, and past eclipse occurrences. As such the following are considerations and tips (which are not all-inclusive and are provided only as suggestions). They are offered as a starting point for you and your local officials:

- Prepare and plan for potential for traffic congestion, full-stops, and vehicles pulled-off the road within your community/jurisdiction.
- Construction and maintenance crews, and the sites that they work within, which must be out on the roads at this time, may experience night like conditions and they should be prepared with appropriate tools, including ANSI Class III garments.
- Be aware traffic congestion is probable both leading up to, and after the eclipse has occurred, as numerous travelers will be traveling at a higher volume than typical to view the event.
- The largest eclipse viewing event we are aware of is in Carbondale. Specifically in this area, routes to and from Carbondale should expect unusual traffic levels. Terre-Haute, IN and many other communities are also hosting events which could impact local traffic. Please be aware of local events planned in your area.
- In addition to the roads within your responsibility, there will be impacts to the traveling public on interstate and state routes. They may detour onto your routes.
- Please consider limiting road closures and construction projects in the days leading up to and after the solar eclipse (April 8, 2024 – day of solar eclipse)
- Be aware traffic congestion is probable after the eclipse has passed your area, as numerous travelers will be returning home.
- Consider contacting and coordinating with your law enforcement agencies or emergency management agencies, so you are aware of their plans and needs related to this event.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

IDOT has been preparing for the eclipse and is in contact with State Agencies throughout the State, as well as surrounding states (MO, IN, AR) in preparation for this eclipse.

Remember special eye protection is required for safe viewing of this or any other eclipse.

As always, we thank you for all your efforts, work, and dedication in continually improving our local road and bridge transportation network.

If you have questions, please contact Tim Peters, [tim.peters@illinois.gov](mailto:tim.peters@illinois.gov) .

Sincerely,



George A. Tapas, P.E., S.E  
Engineer of Local Roads and Streets