



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
TRANSPORTATION CABINET  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Truckers, Travelers Urged To Plan for Extra Traffic Before and After April 8 Solar Eclipse**

*Heavy traffic expected due to influx of visitors in and through Kentucky*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 22, 2024)** – Kentucky state and local agencies urge residents, tourists and truckers to prepare for heavy traffic when the moon’s shadow sweeps across the commonwealth’s western counties and a dozen other states during the afternoon of Monday, April 8. Travelers planning to view the total solar eclipse should expect congested highways and limited parking at rest stops, and pack essentials to ensure a safe and comfortable ride if they experience prolonged delays. To prepare for increased traffic, transportation officials are lifting lane restrictions in select work zones and are informing commercial truck drivers of expected traffic.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) will issue Notify Every Truck (NET) advisories for eclipse traffic, and has identified locations where backups are most likely, including the Interstate 24 Ohio River Bridge at Paducah, the U.S. 41 Twin Bridges at Henderson and bridges that connect Interstates 65 and 64 at Louisville.

In addition, crews will temporarily remove work zone lane restrictions along key routes in parts of Kentucky where heavy eclipse traffic is expected. Some work zones will remain in place:

- I-24 is restricted to 11-foot lanes and a 55 mph speed limit on the Tennessee River Bridge (mile marker 29). Alternate routes include U.S. 62 and KY 453 between Exit 27 and Exit 31, or via Interstate 69 South at I-24 Exit 25 to U.S. 68 East at Exit 47 to return to I-24 at Cadiz Exit 65.
- The Pennyriple Parkway between Nortonville and Hopkinsville, one-lane southbound at Hopkinsville. U.S. 41 offers an alternate two-lane route, but motorists heading south should consider other routes such as Interstate 165.
- Purchase Parkway between the U.S. 45/KY 80 Mayfield Exit 21 interchange and the state line at Fulton.

- Various locations on I-65 in Bullitt and Hardin counties; I-64 and Interstate 264 near Louisville; I-64/I-75 at Lexington (lane shifts); and Interstate 275 in Northern Kentucky near Cincinnati.

State highway crews will be staged throughout western Kentucky to detour or move traffic along in case of backups – especially after the eclipse – but traffic congestion and delays are likely.

“Whether you’re a solar eclipse spectator or a career driver passing through, taking some time now to plan will help ensure the safety of everyone during this unique event,” said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. “We encourage spectators to come early and stay late to help reduce the potential for hours-long gridlock expected when thousands of families head home. Truckers should plan travel routes and schedules with that in mind.”

The event is expected to bring at least 150,000 visitors to the path where it crosses several Western Kentucky counties, with more than 1 million travelers predicted to drive through Kentucky to nearby viewing spots along the main path in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

Based on traffic patterns seen during the 2017 total solar eclipse that also swept across Kentucky, initial congestion was light as visitors traveled to the eclipse path over several days. However, heavy traffic surges occurred when visitors made their return trip.

In April, motorists are advised to expect several hours of traffic congestion at Ohio River crossings and along north-south routes across Kentucky similar to what major cities regularly experience during rush hour. Post-eclipse traffic is likely to hit the Cincinnati and Louisville region April 8 at evening rush hour.

One way to minimize backups is to delay return travel for several hours, or until the initial traffic surge starts to clear. Heavy eclipse traffic could limit access to rest areas and truck stops.

When the eclipse ends, KYTC personnel will be stationed at key interchanges and pinch points to monitor traffic. Portable message boards will direct traffic to alternate routes when needed.

Travelers should consider monitoring Waze for congested traffic ahead and be prepared to reroute to avoid delays. Slow-moving traffic is expected to continue into the evening hours of April 8.

Visit KYTC’s eclipse page at [bit.ly/kytc24eclipse](http://bit.ly/kytc24eclipse) for spectator, travel and pilot tips, eclipse path maps, and for links to district social media pages for eclipse-related announcements. Real-time traffic information is also available online at [GoKY.ky.gov](http://GoKY.ky.gov) or using the Waze app.

### **Spectator Tips for a Safe Event**

Transportation officials offer the following suggestions for event goers:

- **Plan ahead.** Pick a viewing destination and book accommodations in advance. Get eclipse-viewing glasses.
- **Be prepared.** Travel with enough food and water for everyone in your vehicle. Expect lines at restaurants, convenience stores and grocery stores. Check the local weather.

- **Drive smart.** Don't stop along highways or take photos while driving. Watch for pedestrians. Fill up or charge up your vehicle before traveling. Turn on headlights.
- **Come early, stay late.** Avoid leaving immediately after the event to reduce traffic congestion. Visit Kentucky attractions while in town. Several local communities in the total viewing path are organizing eclipse-related events on April 8.

The totality phase will enter Kentucky minutes before 2 p.m., CDT, April 8, in parts of Fulton and Hickman counties before crossing Ballard, McCracken, Livingston, Crittenden, Union and Henderson counties along the Ohio River. It will also pass over small portions of Carlisle, Graves, Webster and Daviess counties.

Additional eclipse planning resources are available at the following sites:

<https://www.kentuckytourism.com/events/2024-eclipse>

<http://www.GreatAmericanEclipse.com>

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