



## BELL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

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[www.bellcountyhealth.org](http://www.bellcountyhealth.org)

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### NEWS RELEASE

#### **For Immediate Release:**

**Date: April 5, 2024**

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#### **Solar Eclipse Preparedness Tips for a Safe and Enjoyable Experience in Bell County**

*Bell County* – On Monday, April 8, 2024, Bell County is set to witness a total solar eclipse, offering residents and visitors a breathtaking experience. To ensure the safety and enjoyment of this rare event, the Bell County Public Health District (BCPH) has compiled essential tips and guidelines.

#### **Solar Eclipse Overview:**

A solar eclipse occurs when the moon passes between the Sun and the Earth, casting a shadow on our planet and temporarily blocking the Sun's light.

#### **Eye Safety: Eclipse Glasses and Filters:**

BCPH emphasizes using certified solar viewing glasses or handheld solar filters to safeguard your eyes during this event. Regular sunglasses are not safe for viewing the Sun. Ensure your eclipse glasses comply with the ISO 12312-2 international safety standard. Always inspect and discard damaged glasses, and never look at the Sun through optical devices like cameras or telescopes while wearing eclipse glasses as the concentrated solar rays will burn through the filter and cause serious eye injury.

#### **Health and Safety Guidelines:**

- Select a safe, open area away from tall buildings and trees for an unobstructed view. Property owners hosting gatherings exceeding 50 people between April 5-9, 2024, must complete a Private Property Eclipse Gathering Form available at the [Bell County Website](http://www.bellcountyhealth.org).
- Follow waste disposal rules and adhere to on-site sewage facility and RV park [regulations](#). Illegal dumping is a crime and a public health hazard.

- Expect increased visitors and traffic congestion. Plan for travel delays, fuel vehicles in advance, and stock up on essentials such as food, medicine, and a first aid kit. Do not stop on the side of the road for viewing.
- While networks are expected to function, increased visitors may affect cellular connections. In emergencies, dial 911, and for non-emergencies, dial 254-298-5500 or text your emergency to 9-1-1 if the call won't go through. Sign up for emergency notifications for Temple [here](#) and for Killeen [here](#).
- Keep pets on leashes or in kennels during the eclipse to prevent distress or disorientation.
- Follow food safety practices to prevent illnesses. Refer to BCPH Food Safety and Sanitation [webpage](#) for resources. Report foodborne illnesses through the BCPH Foodborne Illness [Complaint Form](#) or contact BCPH at **(254) 239-8734**.

BCPH encourages everyone to embrace this rare event while prioritizing safety. By following these solar eclipse preparedness tips, you can ensure a memorable and safe viewing experience for you, your family, and the entire community.

For more information and safety tips, visit the Bell County Public Health District website [www.bellcountyhealth.org](http://www.bellcountyhealth.org) or contact us at 254-532-9800 to ensure you and your loved ones are well-prepared to make the most of this unique experience and to stay up to date on other issues happening in and around Bell County.

**BCPH will be closed on Monday, April 8, 2024 due to the Total Solar Eclipse.**

**Resources:**

- [American Astronomical Society - Eclipse Glasses Safety](#)
- [Bell County Texas - Eclipse Declaration](#)
- [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#)
- [City of Temple Community Notification Enrollment](#)
- [City of Killeen CodeRED Emergency Notification System](#)
- [Bell County Public Health District Food Safety and Sanitation](#)
- [NASA Eclipse Website](#)

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