



Frequently Asked Questions About Our Eclipse

Have questions about the upcoming celestial event in Dripping Springs? These answers should help! They will be updated periodically.

Q: What is the big deal about this eclipse? Don't we have them all the time?

A: A TOTAL solar eclipse is rare. It happens when the moon is closest to the Earth and is directly between the earth and the sun. A total solar eclipse happens somewhere in the world every 18 months, but it only happens in the same place approximately every 375 years. The last time Dripping Springs experienced a total solar eclipse was in the 1800s. Experts and those who have been through a total solar eclipse say it is like nothing you've ever experienced. Suddenly, in the middle of the day, a shadow races toward you at 1,500 miles an hour, and the day is gone. Planets, stars, and the corona are visible as the temperature drops and everyone around is awestruck. You'll never forget it!

Q: What is the timing of the eclipse in Dripping Springs?

A: The total solar eclipse begins in Dripping Springs on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 12:16 pm. That is when the partial eclipse starts here in Dripping. The TOTALITY starts in Dripping Springs at 1:34pm and lasts for 3 minutes before going into a partial eclipse mode again. Then, the eclipse totally ends at 2:57pm.

Duration: 2 hours, 40 minutes, 55 seconds

Duration of Totality: 3:00 minutes

Partial Eclipse Starts: 12:16:33 pm

Totality Begins: 1:34:50 pm

Totality Ends: 1:37:50 pm

Partial Eclipse Ends: 2:57:28 pm

Q: Where is the best place in Dripping Springs to view the eclipse?

A: We are closing a part of our main street in Dripping Springs, Mercer Street, to give a safe place to watch. We are calling it our sunBLOCK Party. We will have food vendors, businesses on Mercer will be open, and there will be business and craft vendors, and local entertainment.

Other places to possibly watch the eclipse are at one of our parks: Dripping Springs Ranch Park; Founders Memorial Park, Dripping Springs Sports and Recreation Park, and Veterans Memorial Park. You can find out more information on those parks here: cityofdrippingsprings.com/park-system. Charro Ranch Park will be closed.

Q: *What is the sunBLOCK Party?*

A: We're going to have a "BLOCK" party and are closing down part of Mercer Street to create a fun and safe gathering place to watch the Eclipse. This isn't a big festival or concert, just a nice place to gather so you can watch the eclipse with others! We'll have music supplied by local students and some local entertainers throughout the day. We have food vendors and food trucks! And we'll have close to 20 eclipse-related vendors and businesses and more! Visitors can shop at Mercer Street stores, listen to music, purchase commemorative items and more! Cell service might be iffy so bring cash in case you can't use your phone or bank cards. 🌞 🌙

Join the cosmic experience of the eclipse at the sunBLOCK Party. This isn't an event like our upcoming fabulous Founders Day Festival (which is almost here... yay!). The sunBLOCK event is designed to give you a safe place to share the moment with others in our community. We created this viewing space because we know that watching an eclipse with others can help transform a solitary observation into a communal celebration under our beautiful Dripping Springs sky.

And it doesn't matter if it's cloudy! It will still get dark (darker actually!) and we'll still have an amazing experience with this shared sense of wonder and awe. In a world often filled with division, the sunBLOCK Party will offer Dripping a celestial opportunity to come together in appreciation of something greater than ourselves! All for free!

The event is located on Mercer Street from 10am-6pm on Monday. And it's in walking distance to Veterans Memorial Park where our giant, life-size eclipse glasses are, for a nice photo op for you!

For more information, go to <https://www.drippingeclipse.com/blockparty>

Q: *Do I need reservations for the sunBLOCK Party? Is there a fee?*

A: No, you do not need reservations. The event is free.

Q: *Will there be commemorative items for sale at the sunBLOCK Party?*

A: Some Mercer Street businesses will be open, as well as other temporary vendors selling items. Please bring cash and checks. Internet and cell service will be unreliable on the day of the event due to the high demand during the eclipse, requiring businesses and vendors to rely on cash or checks rather than credit cards or mobile pay.

Q: *Will there be food at the sunBLOCK Party? What about water?*

A: We will have some food vendors and food trucks. May we also suggest you bring a lunch/snack, too, in case of limited food. We will also have a water truck sponsored by American Water, which will supply water as needed. We recommend bringing a water bottle.

Q: *Can I be a vendor at the sunBLOCK Party?*

A: There are no spots still available. Thank you!



Get Ready For The Magic

APRIL 8TH | 2024 | 10AM - 6PM

MERCER STREET



Q: How about Parking at the sunBLOCK Party?

A: Currently, there is no designated parking area for this event. Parking will be available on a first-come basis at Dripping Springs Ranch Park, Dripping Springs Sports and Recreation Park, or at any of our local parks, except Charro Ranch Park, which will be closed. For the sunBLOCK Party, there is no true parking establishment in Dripping Springs. Usually when we have events downtown, people park along the open streets, sometimes at our Veterans Memorial Park, which is at the corner of US 290 and RR12. Founders Memorial Park (.9 miles) and Sports & Recreation Park (.7 miles) are also within walking distance to Mercer Street. Look at the map at <https://www.drippingeclipse.com/blockparty> for possible parking, but make sure you don't park in areas marked with no parking! Be kind to establishments!



Parking can be found along the side streets and other areas. There is no set parking. Parking can also be found on other side of Route 12 and around the main Mercer Street area. Please follow all signs on businesses if they mark parking for customers only. Be kind!

Q: How do I safely look at the eclipse?

A: You must use special safe eclipse glasses to view the eclipse. Interesting fact: a TOTAL solar eclipse is the only type of solar eclipse where you can momentarily remove your solar glasses for the brief period of time when the moon completely blocks the sun. Looking directly at the sun is unsafe except during the totality phase of a solar eclipse, which lasts for 3 minutes in Dripping Springs.

Partial Eclipse Starts: 12:16:33 pm
Totality Begins: 1:34:50 pm
Totality Ends: 1:37:50 pm
Partial Eclipse Ends: 2:57:28 pm

- During partial times, put on your glasses before looking at the sun.
- When totality begins and for three minutes during it, you can safely remove your glasses.
- When those three minutes are up, put your glasses back on!

Q: *Where do I find eclipse glasses?*

A: Most stores will be selling them. But buy them early, as many will sell out! You can also purchase eclipse glasses at City Hall, 511 Mercer Street, Dripping Springs, TX 78620. Only while supplies last. As we get closer to the event, some limits may be set on how many can be purchased.

Wherever you get your glasses, make sure they are ISO Safety Certified. There are many fakes online. Make sure you purchase from a reputable establishment.

Q: *How many visitors will be in Dripping Springs to view the eclipse?*

A: We do not know the exact number as a total solar eclipse has not happened in Dripping Springs since the 1800s. This truly is a once-in-a-lifetime event for Dripping Springs. Not only are visitors coming to Dripping Springs, but they will be traveling through our city to go to cities west, such as Fredericksburg and Johnson City.

Q: *What businesses are open? What is the best restaurant to eat?*

A: We do not know what businesses are planning. Some may be closed due to difficulties in employees getting to work. If you have a business in mind you are hoping to visit, reach out to them ahead of time. If you are visiting Dripping Springs, we recommend packing a lunch/snack in case food restaurants are limited. In addition, keep an eye on Destination Dripping Springs as there may be additional information on events on that site: <https://www.destinationdrippingsprings.com/>.

Q: *Are there public restrooms?*

A: There are no public restrooms, but Dripping Springs will have plenty of portable restrooms in key locations including Mercer Street. In addition, the restrooms at Dripping Springs Ranch Park will be open.

Q: *What about traffic? Will the City of Dripping Springs or Hays County have a traffic plan for the event?*

A: There are no traffic plans other than the closure of Mercer Street as this is a rare event and there is no history or mechanism to determine when roads will be traveled. Please plan for heavy traffic a few days before, during, and after. Traffic will be heavy leading up to it and the heaviest right after the eclipse.

Q: *I've heard they are closing streets, that 290 will be closed? Is this true?*

A: The only road being closed is Mercer Street to help with traffic flow and provide a safe place to view the eclipse. All other roads are open! However, traffic will be heavy so plan accordingly.

Q: *What should I do as far as gas and other supplies?*

A: Plan to have a full tank of gas ahead of time. Gas stations may be very busy or may be waiting for resupply. Same with food: get your groceries and needs ahead of time, to ensure you have them.

Q: *I have heard we are having the Texas State Guard in Dripping? Is this due to safety issues?*

A: It is exciting news that the Texas State Guard (TXSG) will be using the eclipse event for their annual training. The Soldiers of the Texas State Guard, 3rd Battalion 6th Brigade, are gearing up for their 2024 Annual Training with a unique twist—dedicating their efforts to a Community Service Event: the Eclipse in Dripping Springs. They are partnering with the Hays County Emergency Management team and Dripping Springs Emergency Management to provide support in traffic control and communications during the eclipse. Residents and visitors may notice them, as they will be doing their training

throughout the City and will be dressed in their State Guard attire. But do not be alarmed! They are here to help and are just training.

Q: *What about cell service?*

A: We anticipate a high demand for cellular service during the eclipse and during the day on Monday, the eighth. You may find your cell phone or internet service does not work. Please develop a communication plan with family and friends if you lose or have limited service. If you only have a mobile phone at home, find out which of your neighbors have a land-line number in case you need to call 911 for an emergency.

Q: *I have heard Dripping has a Declaration of Disaster related to the eclipse? What does that mean?*

A: Many cities and counties in Texas are doing this for the eclipse. There is no reason to be concerned. Enacting a disaster declaration in advance of the event activates the city's Emergency Management Plan to take lifesaving precautions and authorizes more aid if needed. It allows Dripping Springs to streamline decision-making, access additional resources, and coordinate emergency response efforts to effectively address any needs we may have.

Q: *Will schools be open?*

A: All DSISD schools will be closed on Monday, April 8, 2024.

Q: *Is there camping available?*

A: Dripping Springs Ranch Park has RV and Primitive Camping Spots Available! To learn more or to reserve your spot, go [to https://www.drippingspringsranchpark.com/eclipse-camping](https://www.drippingspringsranchpark.com/eclipse-camping)

Q: *Can I park an RV or camper in my driveway, front yard, or street?*

A: Please see Dripping Springs Code of Ordinances. Please also check your HOA rules.

Q: *Can I set up chairs on the street or on City property days before the event?*

A: No, nothing can be set up on City property overnight.

Q: *Is the giant pair of eclipse glasses at Veterans Memorial Park real?*

A: No, they are just an educational display and a fun place to take a picture. You won't be able to see anything looking out of the "lenses" on them. You can see these located on the corner of HW 290 and Route 12, in downtown Dripping Springs. Whether posting on social media or just to keep as a memento, it's a fun spot in Dripping to help you share your excitement of the eclipse. A big thank you to Flying Fish Swim Academy for sponsoring them!



Q: *Is there an email address I can use to contact someone to answer a question not addressed on these FAQs?*

A: Please email eclipse@cityofdrippingsprings.com



Tips for Business Owners!



Are you a business owner? Here is what you can do to prepare your business:

Back-up Plans:

Prepare for an 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 are met, etc. by Thursday, the 17th. Gas stations may be very busy or may be waiting for 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, the 8th.

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, the 8th. You may find you are not able to make transactions; have a backup 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:

Evaluate when you receive your regular deliveries; deliveries scheduled for Monday, April 8th may be significantly delayed due to the overwhelming number of vehicles trying to come in and leave the city. Consider rescheduling for Tuesday or ordering extra the week before.

Restrooms:

Expect customers who may be primarily interested in using business restrooms. Public restrooms will be in short supply. The City of Dripping Springs is bringing in portable toilets and they will be located on Mercer Street, at Veterans Memorial Park, Founders Memorial Park, Sports and Rec Park, and Dripping Springs Ranch Park.

Construction

The City is closing its offices on April 8th, which means there will be no inspections or permitting on that day as both building and planning will be closed. The City is recommending that construction on job sites not occur on the 8th due to the expected increase in traffic and that it will likely be extremely difficult to travel out of Dripping Springs directly after the Eclipse on that afternoon and evening.

Please check these FAQs often, as they will be updated. For the most up-to-date information, go to drippingeclipse.com, the official Dripping Springs website and the information source on all things eclipse in Dripping Springs.