

Brown Co Readies For Eclipse Crowds

Editor's note: the following was submitted by Brown County Sheriff John Merchant

I would like to pass on to county residents and our upcoming visitors, some information and concerns about the eclipse that will happen on the 21st of this month. As you can expect, we have been receiving a large volume of calls and questions and I hope I can clear up any confusion there might be.

There is absolutely no way we can predict exactly how many people will be coming in to our county to view this event but we are planning and preparing for a large number. Current estimates show that our county could easily double in population if not more, which means close to 10,000 extra people and many extra vehicles on our roadways, could be here for this event.

I know that all law enforcement agencies, emergency and medical services as well as city entities are readying for the event with plans in place to keep everyone as safe as possible. To make sure we can do this as safely as possible, we are asking for everyone's cooperation.

FOR THOSE COMING TO BROWN COUNTY:

#1 Please make sure to park in a location that does not impede traffic in any way or that compromises your safety or the safety of others. ROADWAYS MUST REMAIN CLEAR AND UNOBSTRUCTED AT ALL TIMES UNLESS OTHERWISE POSTED!

#2 Plan on where you are going beforehand, do not come in to the county and decide to pull over when the eclipse happens. This will cause major safety issues if the number of vehicles exceed our expectation.

#3 Make sure to have plenty of water with you at all times as well as any needed medications if you have a medical condition.

#4 Check with the Hiawatha and Horton Chamber of commerce or police departments for specific questions on events in their respective cities and how to obtain more information.

#5 Obey all state, local and traffic laws while you are a guest in our county. Also, do not leave your trash along the roadside, please be respectful and pick up after yourselves.

#6 Ask questions, there will be many law enforcement and people assisting in this event, if you have a question, please get with someone who can help.

#7 Be prepared for limited or no cell phone service.

#8 We are suggesting contacting cities within the county to find out the best location for viewing the eclipse such as parking lots, rural airports, city and county lakes, ball fields, etc. --Remember, the roadways must remain clear at all times.

#9 Only dial 911 in an emergency.

FOR THOSE LIVING IN BROWN COUNTY:

#1 If you are traveling the 21st be aware there could be delays due to increased traffic, allow extra time and be alert.

#2 If you are at home, I am telling folks to prepare as if a winter storm is coming. Make sure to have plenty of food, groceries, water, formula, diapers, medication, gasoline etc. If we have the increase in people as projected, a quick trip to the store could be a major event. Be prepared for the worst and hope for the best.

#3 With as many people coming to the county, I am sure local people could become frustrated with those who are wanting to park where they shouldn't etc. If you encounter these folks be as polite as possible and if law enforcement needs to get involved, contact us at once. We are planning on having most of our deputies out during the day throughout the county and depending on traffic, response time could be lengthy. Other agencies will be in our county as well, assisting where needed.

#4 Be prepared for limited or no cell phone service

We would like everyone to enjoy this event and have a positive experience. We are doing our best to make sure provisions are in place for your safety during this event. Please feel free to contact us if you need additional information at 785-742-7125

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Many Signals Communications