

# Eclipse Planning Check-In

04/04/24

Much of northern Vermont is within the path of totality for the April 8 solar eclipse, making this an ideal place to witness the rare natural event. State agencies are planning for thousands of people to visit Vermont to view it (see [2024 Total Solar Eclipse in Vermont](#)), and towns and cities of all sizes as well as tourism-focused organizations are planning [local events](#).

VLCT is hosting webinars every two weeks from January 25 to April 4 to keep municipalities informed about State plans and to learn about community-level plans, so municipalities can anticipate how all these plans might intersect (or conflict!). **This is the final Eclipse Planning Check-in.**

[State Planning Update](#) | [Weather Update](#) | [Resources](#) | [Check-in Q&A](#)

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## State Planning Update

**Eric Forand, VEM Director**, reiterated the State's plans for extending hours for Welcome Centers and augmenting bathroom facilities along interstates. The State has spoken with fuel dealers and others alerting them to anticipated travel impacts.

The State is working with emergency management agencies throughout New England on messaging. As noted previously, the main messages are stay off trails, have a plan, have provisions in your car, understand cell phone coverage, and have a paper plan for travel in case map apps stop working.

For municipalities, the State is advising municipalities to let organizations and businesses know if they may be affected by local road closures – whether eclipse-related or mud season-related closures. VEM's [Eclipse webpage](#) lists known state and local road closures. The state encourages municipalities to post their road closures in Waze too. Waze information only appears on the day of the closure. All of this allows people to adjust their activities in advance of encountering challenges.

Municipalities can monitor traffic on state highways using 511. It is very robust in showing traffic movements. You can see images on State cameras to monitor traffic movement for situational awareness, and you can see state messaging.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) will be fully open on Monday. VTrans also will have its Traffic Operations Center fully open on Monday.

Forand reminded municipalities that VEM will have a virtual situational briefing on Sunday at 2 pm for Emergency Management Directors.

**Katharine Ingram, Department of Tourism & Marketing (VDTM) Trade and Partner Relations Manager**, noted VDTM is messaging similarly to VEM. They are encouraging visitors to stay another day and sharing what the travel model anticipates. VDTM is aware of ~130 events planned for eclipse day. Ingram requested that municipalities let VDTM know of any other events where there will be large groups of people gathering even if these events aren't public.

Ingram noted that Waze doesn't show road surface, so visitors might travel a gravel road it is not closed.

## Weather Update



- VEM's [Eclipse webpage](#) lists known state and local road closures. Municipalities can report known road closures by calling VEM at 800-347-0488.
- [Waze crowd-sourced navigation app](#) is a free, Google-owned GPS app that provides travelers with up-to-date navigation and traffic information. Municipalities can set up an account and use Waze to list local road closures and day-of-event warnings. The [Waze Communities Knowledge Hub page](#) includes How-To Guides and other resources. Online instructions for Waze: <https://www.waze.com/wazeforcities/>. Directions for [How to Create a Waze for Cities Account](#) are posted on VLCT's Eclipse webpage.
- National Weather Service Burlington Eclipse webpage: <https://www.weather.gov/btv/eclipse2024>.

### Previously Included

- Visit [VLCT's Eclipse Planning Check-in Recordings and Resources webpage](#) for check in slides and notes, updates, and new information.
- Email Katie Buckley ([kbuckley@vlct.org](mailto:kbuckley@vlct.org)) or Bonnie Waninger ([bwaninger@vlct.org](mailto:bwaninger@vlct.org)) from VLCT's Federal Funding Assistance Program if you have questions after the call.
- Priority Telecommunications Service (PTS) Dialer App instructions: Visit [cisa.gov/pts](https://cisa.gov/pts) for information about downloading and utilizing. Burce Belt, Vermont PTS Area Representative, contact information: 202-993-6293 or [bruce.belt@associates.cisa.dhs.gov](mailto:bruce.belt@associates.cisa.dhs.gov). Contact Lynn Shea at 202-240-9720 or [lynn.shea@associates.cisa.dhs.gov](mailto:lynn.shea@associates.cisa.dhs.gov) regarding uploads of bulk spreadsheet (multiple municipal contacts) for GETS and WPS.
- [State of Vermont April 8 Solar Eclipse webpage](#). This link allows municipalities to list their events. To make a listing, create an account using "Manage Your Events" at the bottom of the webpage. Find events in neighboring communities to coordinate planning for impacts. Even if you aren't having an event, another community's event might impact your community.
- *Vermont State Parks*: A list of parks that will be opened can be found in the [Vermont State Parks blogspot](#). Park facilities will be closed for this event. Portable toilets and/or pit/composting toilets will be available. Parking will be available at each of these locations. Parking may be limited depending on the number of visitors. Check back for updates as some viewing locations may change due to on the ground conditions as the date nears.
- *The Vermont Department of Libraries* [Eclipse 2024 Information webpage](#).
- *Vermont Public's* [2024 Eclipse in Vermont webpage](#) includes events that are not included on the State Eclipse webpage. Municipalities can use this webpage to check for additional events in neighboring communities to help coordinate planning and response activities.
- The State has a dedicated text notification system for the event to convey weather, traffic, and other information; text [VTECLIPSE](#) to [888777](#) to register.
- The State has a [survey form](#) municipalities can use to report events ~~for incorporation into traffic modeling~~. (Traffic modeling is complete) Continue to use the [Vermont Vacation calendar](#) to have events published.

- Vermont Tourism and Marketing Program [Basic Listing Request Form](#). This form allows people to list their tourism-related services, including one-time lodging for the Solar Eclipse. One complimentary listing is permitted per business or organization.
- [“How Can You Tell If Your Eclipse Glasses or Handheld Solar Viewers Are Safe?”](#) *American Astronomical Society*, 2024.
- Howells, Kate. [“Are Your Solar Eclipse Glasses Safe?”](#) *The Planetary Society*, 7 September 2023..
- American Astronomical Society (AAS) list of approved reputable vendors: <https://eclipse.aas.org/eye-safety/viewers-filters>.

## Q&A Report

**Q1.** Is there statewide messaging for message boards to promote keeping off dirt roads/ trails

**A1.** The State Public Information Officer has been messaging this and has asked other states to message this. Message boards will state this too. The state has 75 message boards out on roads.

**Q2.** How do we submit a local road closure for publication on the State’s webpage.

**A2.** Call VEM at 800-347-0488. Call takers will take your information and route it to the appropriate person.

For the eclipse, any requests for assistance should be directed to the State Emergency Operations Center by calling 800-347-0488.

**Q3.** Will the state be posting its messaging information as a statewide post on Front Porch Forum?

**A3.** The state is looking for municipalities to message on Front Porch Forum.

**Q4.** Can state message board messages be sent to EMD for use?

**A4.** [511](#) has the message board message if you want to use the messages. To find the messages, locate the Legend on the right-hand side of the screen, and click “Message Signs”.

**Q5.** 511 is by state. What about I-90 and other roads in the path of totality. Is there a national road network?

**A5.** The 511 system is a national traveler's resource set up and run by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). About 37 states participate as well as some major cities. If you search the internet for “511” and the state you need, the search will return a website address if that state participates in the 511 system.