

MAR 2024

Indiana harnesses the excitement of the eclipse

2024 is a big year in tourism for Indiana. Between the All-Star NBA game last month, the Indianapolis 500 in May, the Olympic swimming trials in June, Taylor Swift's Eras Tour in November, the Big Ten Football Championship in December and more, there will be plenty to keep residents and visitors entertained. But the most awe-inspiring event may be one happening above Indiana.

On April 8, much of Indiana will fall in the path of totality for the 2024 solar eclipse and the entire state will experience at least 95% totality. "It is estimated that Indiana could see close to 500,000 visitors for the eclipse and the days surrounding it," said Amy Howell, Indiana Destination Development Corporation Vice President of Tourism, Marketing & Communications. She and her team have been hard at work promoting and preparing for these visitors. As part of their preparation, they turned to representatives from South Carolina to learn about their 2017 eclipse experience.

They discovered that in South Carolina, "the economic impact of visitor spending in the state due to the eclipse was \$269 million according to their post-eclipse research." Howell and her team plan to measure the economic impacts after Indiana's eclipse and have high hopes. But what makes this



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eclipse even more spectacular? First, the moon will be closer to the Earth meaning the path of totality will be wider, ranging from 108 to 122 miles (in 2017, the path was 62 to 71 miles wide). The path of totality for the eclipse is also more densely populated than in 2017 with an estimated 31.6 million people within it. Nearly four million of those people are Hoosiers.

With so much excitement surrounding this event, IDDC wanted to make sure there was plenty of information available. "We have a dedicated eclipse webpage that includes an interactive events map, which is a great resource for visitors but can also be useful for businesses as they plan for the eclipse," said Justus O'Neil, Public Relations & Social Media Officer for IDDC. He and his team are working to keep

the site updated as more events are scheduled and announced. They're also working with local businesses by providing event planning guides, safety information (in partnership with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security) and more.

According to O'Neil, "the hundreds of events that are being hosted across Indiana are a testament to the excitement and how prepared our state is to be an incredible host to our visitors." It would seem NASA thinks so too as they've appointed the Indianapolis Motor Speedway as an official broadcasting location for the eclipse. Some other notable events include:

 A three-day festival at the Wayne County Fairgrounds in Richmond with food vendors, fireworks, drone shows and more.

- Solarpalooza, a free, multi-day event hosted by the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville that will include a visit from a retired NASA astronaut.
- Several events at The Mill in Terre Haute, a new state-of-theart concert venue.

No matter where residents or visitors are in Indiana, they'll find an incredible variety of eclipserelated events. With the way towns and businesses across the state are taking advantage of the excitement surrounding this unique spectacle, it's clear that Indiana is the place to be for the 2024 solar eclipse. For even more events, visit IDDC's eclipse website and check out the DNR and State Museum event pages in this issue.

Stay safe on the road before, during and after the eclipse

In preparation for the upcoming total solar eclipse, the Indiana State Police (ISP) has been working alongside its colleagues at various state agencies to include Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

ISP's primary focus before, during and after this event will be that of traffic safety on interstate, U.S. and state highways, especially those leading to, within and out of the path of totality.

Increased traffic and congestion are expected as residents and tourists alike make their way to viewing destinations. Areas near the eclipse centerline are anticipated to see the greatest influx of visitors, including Vincennes, Bloomington, Franklin and just north of Richmond. Indianapolis and Evansville are also included in the path.

ISP has been working with INDOT already in putting safety-related messaging out through traditional and social media sources to keep safety in the forethought for Hoosiers and potential visitors alike. That messaging includes:

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Stay safe on the road before, during and after the eclipse

Before the eclipse

- · Research your viewing site, considering accessibility, parking and crowd size. Check INDOT TrafficWise on the mobile app or at 511in.org to plan your route and monitor traffic conditions. Plan to arrive to your destination early.
- Anticipate increased traffic and congestion, especially in areas in or near the path of totality.
- Reach your destination safely buckle up and put your phone down while driving.
- Pack plenty of snacks and water, as well as charging cables for electronics and mobile devices. in the event you or your group become stranded.
- Make sure your vehicle has a full tank of gas and top off fluids

- before you head out in case you're stuck in traffic for a long period of time. Use this eclipseready checklist for more road trip essentials.
- Don't forget your solar eclipse viewing glasses! You will need specially designed glasses to avoid damage to your eyes.

During the eclipse

- Avoid travel during the eclipse or in the main path if possible.
- Exit the roadway to stop and view the solar eclipse. Do not stop along highways or park on the shoulder for viewing.
- Do not take photos or videos while driving. Indiana is a handsfree state. Holding mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets while driving is

- prohibited by state law.
- Do not wear eclipse glasses while driving.
- Turn on your headlights. Do not rely on automatic lights.
- Watch for pedestrians, especially along secondary

After the eclipse

- Plan your post-event transportation method well in advance. If celebrating, ensure everyone has a safe and sober way to return home. Designate a sober driver or arrange for alternate transportation.
- Exercise patience when leaving your viewing location as traffic may be heavy. Follow instructions from law enforcement or emergency personnel and be considerate of fellow drivers. Stay put and stick around to avoid the post-event rush.
- Clean up after yourself and dispose of trash in designated receptacles or take it with you.
- Once again, check INDOT TrafficWise on the mobile app or at 511in.org to plan your route and monitor traffic conditions.

Visit the sites below and follow INDOT and ISP on social media for more information regarding the total solar eclipse in Indiana.

- eclipse2024.in.gov
- visitindiana.com/eclipse2024
- greatamericaneclipse.com/ indiana-2024-eclipse
- science.nasa.gov

Article submitted by Indiana State Police



Order Indiana Eclipse apparel for 20% off

Order before March 12 to receive it before April 8!

GRAB YOUR NEW FAVORITE T-SHIRT AND SHOW OFF YOUR STATE SPIRIT **WINDIANA**



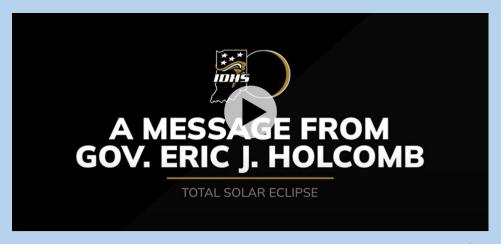
SCAN OR CODE FOR IDINDIANA APPAREL



INDIANA STATE EMPLOYEE **DISCOUNT CODE:** 20% OFF Eclipse Apparel ONLY (Shirts/Sweatshirt) Enter code at checkout W.VISITINDIANA.COM/SHOP

An eclipse message from Governor Eric J. Holcomb

The solar eclipse on April 8, 2024 will be an exciting time for the State of Indiana and we look forward to the range of festivities that will be hosted across the state. Governor Eric J. Holcomb has created a special message for Hoosier communities and visitors that are preparing for this solar event. Click the thumbnail to the right to watch the message now.



IDHS total solar eclipse planning efforts

The eclipse will soon make its journey across North America, beginning on the Pacific Coast of Mexico, traveling across the United States from Texas to Maine and ultimately reaching the Atlantic Coast of Canada.

Indiana is within a one-day drive from 70% of the country's population. Indiana will be a target destination for many people from around the country who want to view a total solar eclipse in their lifetime. Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to travel to the Hoosier state for the eclipse. Planning before the event is critical to be safe and enjoy this historic event.

Sixty-four (64) counties in Indiana are within the path of the total solar eclipse. The twelve (12) Indiana counties within the center line of totality have the longest periods of totality, the highest viewing demands and the highest demands on local infrastructure and services. The 12 counties include:

- 1. Knox
- 2. Greene
- 3. Monroe
- 4. Brown
- 5. Morgan
- 6. Johnson
- 7. Shelby
- 8. Hancock
- 9. Rush
- 10. Henry
- 11. Wayne
- 12. Randolph

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) provides coordination to ensure the state can build, sustain and improve its capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recovery from and mitigate all hazards, including

the 2024 total solar eclipse.

Many state agencies, local officials and private sector partners started planning for the eclipse years ago.



IDHS brings everyone to one table to make sure all are on the same page to identify major points of concern, planning priorities, mitigation guidance and more. The state planning team has more than 140 contributing partners. Subject matter experts meet monthly to discuss the latest developments, new procedures and how the public is reacting to eclipse preparation messaging.

IDHS created an eclipse website to educate local agencies and the public about the eclipse and how to prepare for it. IDHS will be sharing more messaging through social media as the eclipse approaches.

The expected population increases before, during and after the eclipse likely will result in extreme demands and stresses on local infrastructure and services, including local law enforcement, fire and EMS services, medical facilities, hotels, campsites, food, water, restaurants, fuel, utilities, entertainment facilities, parks, etc.

Because of that extreme demand. IDHS will raise the activation level of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) for the days leading up to the eclipse and the day of the eclipse. The SEOC is the primary hub for Indiana's emergency support

and coordination efforts to gather and disseminate event information, respond to requests for assistance from counties and state agencies, identify and coordinate priority actions, and allocate resources. The SEOC will be monitoring what is happening around the state and allocate resources if a local county or state partner requests help.

The biggest message IDHS wants the public to know is that this is going to be a fun event for Indiana, but preparing ahead of time will make sure that everything happens smoothly. If anyone is planning to travel on major roadways before, during and after the eclipse, be prepared for heavy traffic. Fill up gas tanks and pack drinks, snacks and extra clothes in your vehicle so if you are stuck in traffic for a long time, you have some supplies to hold you over until you can get to your destination. Learn how to make a vehicle emergency kit on GetPrepared.in.gov.

Don't forget to wear proper eclipse viewing glasses that meet the ISO 12312-2 international standard for such products.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Homeland Security

Get ready for Indiana's April 8 skyshow

On that date, a once-in-a-lifetime event will cross Indiana skies.

The last time a total solar eclipse crossed the Hoosier State, Ulysses S. Grant was president, Purdue University had been founded a few months before and the telegraph was the fastest way to pass information across the country.

Before that day, Aug. 7, 1869, the last total solar eclipse to cross over what would become central Indiana happened during the Byzantine Empire, in 1205.

But the 2024 eclipse will soon pass in front of the sun, completely blocking it and making the afternoon day look like night in much of Indiana. The darkness will last around four minutes in the center of the eclipse's path, also called its zone of totality, and all areas within the zone will experience a period of darkness. The zone will encompass about half of the state as shown on the map at on.IN.gov/eclipse, a website that provides a wealth of eclipse information.

The sky will begin to darken around

1:30 p.m. ET in the zone, and starting around 3 p.m., complete darkness will take over, lasting four minutes at the zone's center. The dark period will be shorter the farther you are from the center, but all places within the zone will experience at least two minutes of darkness during a time that on all other days is fully lit by the sun.

The rest of the state outside the zone of totality will not experience full daytime darkness but will be able to see changes in the sky. For example, New Albany, in the southeast, will get 99% totality, or 99% total darkness, and South Bend, in the northwest, will experience 96% totality.

Although 99% totality might seem as though it would provide essentially the same experience as being within the zone of totality, it won't, according to Catherine Pilachowski, the Daniel Kirkwood Chair in astronomy at Indiana University and former president of the American Astronomical Society (AAS). That's why she encourages everyone

> not in the zone to do everything they can to plan to be within it April 8.

"Think about right before or right after sunset," she said. "It's not dark. Even a little sliver of sunlight will

leave a relatively bright sky."

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has spent more than a year preparing for this event. It has 54 properties in the eclipse's zone of totality, including 14 state parks; 14 fish & wildlife areas; 11 state forests; six state-managed lakes; three state-managed nature preserves; Starve Hollow State Recreation Area; the DNR's two off-road state recreation areas, Redbird and Interlake; and three satellite properties managed by the Division of State Parks. All rooms at state park inns in the zone are booked. Reservable campsites may still be available in some locations; visit camp.IN.gov to check. Nonreservable DNR campsites, found only at a few state forest locations, will be first-come, firstserved, as usual.

If you live within the zone of totality, you may want to stay home and view the eclipse from your backyard. The event is expected to draw many watchers from out of state, and the population in some towns within the zone could increase threefold. The time it normally takes you to drive back home could more than double. Parking will fill early, and entry to state park properties will close when those spots are taken. If you visit a DNR property the day of the eclipse, leave home early (those properties with gates will open them at 7 a.m.) and plan to stay the entire day. Properties with entrance gates will have them open, so bring your annual entrance pass, cash or credit card to pay admission.



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Get ready for Indiana's April 8 skyshow

Ginger Murphy, deputy director of the Division of State Parks, suggests those going to DNR properties prepare by packing a bag like they would for carry-on luggage on an airplane, including food, water, medicines and equipment—and a change of clothes, just in case. Most comfort stations will be open for use. At state parks and other statepark-managed properties, staff and volunteers will direct guests to the best areas for eclipse watching. Watch for these workers as you enter.

One of the best ways to safely view the eclipse is with a pair of eclipse glasses, which are specially designed to block the sun's rays. Make sure your pair comes from a manufacturer that has been approved by the AAS, as listed at eclipse.aas.org/resources/solarfilters. You can buy yours, adorned with the state's eclipse logo, on the website shopINstateparks.com. Four-packs cost \$10 plus shipping and handling. The same glasses can also be purchased at Indiana State Park property offices and inns gift shops at four for \$10 or \$3 each, plus tax. Some glasses may be available for purchase at state park properties the day of viewing, but supplies will be limited, so don't wait until then. Once you have your glasses, make sure to protect them so they don't get scratched or otherwise damaged.

Commemorative eclipse logo T-shirts are also available from shopINstateparks.com. The shortsleeve version costs \$24.95 plus tax, and the long-sleeve shirt costs \$32.95, plus tax, along with shipping and handling. Park offices and inn

gift shops are also starting to stock eclipse shirts; call ahead for shirt and size availability.

Many state park properties are offering interpretive programming that will address how eclipse day will affect Indiana. Those programs will kick into high gear on the weekends just before the eclipse. Some park properties will have events April 8, after the eclipse ends, for those who want to stay and wait for traffic to let up before they leave.

See viewing locations, times, maps and tips for experiencing the eclipse on DNR properties at on.IN.gov/ eclipse.

If you haven't already, make sure to download the DNR smartphone app (on.IN.gov/dnr-apps) before you leave home. In case of emergency, notifications will be sent through it—and you'll be glad you have it for future trips to DNR properties.

However and wherever you choose to view the eclipse, make your plans and don't miss it. The next solar eclipse to cross the United States won't be until 2044, and that will be over North Dakota and South Dakota. The next solar eclipse to cross Indiana skies won't be until 2099, and the zone of totality will only be the northeast corner. So, thank your lucky stars for April 8, and get ready to see a few of them twinkle during a time of day you probably won't see that happen again.

Article submitted by Scott Roberts, Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Pulse Survey is coming!



The Indiana State Personnel Department conducts the Pulse Survey twice a year to give you the opportunity to tell us more about your experience working for the state. We use this survey to ask for your feedback so we can build a culture that serves you while you serve your community.

The Pulse Survey is confidential, and no identifiable information will be shared with your agency or your managers.

Mark your calendars! This spring's survey is open tomorrow, Mar. 6 -Mar. 22.

Artwork by Heather Brewer (Indiana Department of Insurance)



INDOT helps to pave the way to a successful eclipse weekend

INDOT began preparing for the 2024 total solar eclipse the second the last one ended more than six years ago.

In August 2017, Vincennes **District Deputy Commissioner** Rusty Fowler and his daughter drove from southwest Indiana to Hopkinsville, Kentucky, where the ground duration for totality was one of the highest in the country. The path of totality did not include Indiana in 2017, but many Hoosiers experienced a partial eclipse.

"It took two and a half hours to get to Hopkinsville from my house," said Fowler. "That day in 2017, after the eclipse was over, it took nine hours to get back home."

Chaos accompanied his journey home. Vehicles jammed narrow roadways, were parked on the sides of the road, boxed in other vehicles at viewing spots and some motorists hadn't fully filled gas tanks and ran out of fuel in the massive backups. Gas stations in more remote locations were tapped out of fuel.

Fowler's first-hand experience within the path of totality sounded the alarms. INDOT leaders started planning because they knew that 6.5 years later, the next total solar eclipse would include most of Indiana in the path of totality, meaning that hundreds of thousands would potentially flock to the Hoosier State to see it.

INDOT Statewide Emergency Management Director Mike Nichols and Emergency Management Liaison Lyle Sadler took cues from Fowler and joined the State of Indiana's

total solar eclipse planning taskforce in early 2022.

At the March 2022 Purdue Road School Transportation Conference and Expo, Nichols implored local officials to pay attention to ingress and egress routes in their communities. He informed them that in the weeks and months leading up to the eclipse, INDOT signal technicians would check statemaintained traffic lights ahead of time to ensure that law enforcement panels are working so they could be controlled manually, if necessary. He also said signal and maintenance technicians would be on-call and available across the state to respond as needed.

At the 2022 Road School, Nichols also explained that near the eclipse date, INDOT would pull back maintenance crews and limit road closures and restrictions where possible to help with traffic flow and display messages on message boards starting a week before the eclipse to remind motorists to prepare.

Since March 2022, Nichols has made dozens of presentations around the state to various organizations to help prepare for the event. Nichols, Sadler and other INDOT Emergency and Response staff have been involved in national and regional meetings with their peers to learn best practices and coordinate efforts.

As a result, INDOT will set up an event-specific traffic operations center located at INDOT's Traffic Management Center (TMC) in Indianapolis. The TMC will be staffed with 25 additional subject matter



experts, including personnel from INDOT, the Indiana State Police, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, the Integrated Public Safety Commission, and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Additionally, INDOT plans to temporarily modify traffic signals and other traffic-control measures to help with the expected increases in traffic, increase staffing at rest areas and welcome centers, and adjusting maintenance and construction schedules to limit impacts to traffic.

These decisions involved INDOT leaders in Operations/Maintenance, Construction, Traffic Management, Technical Services and their Executive Office.

INDOT's Strategic Communications team has also been heavily involved with the total solar

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INDOT paves the way to a successful eclipse weekend

eclipse. In October 2023, team members attended the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) committee on transportation communications national meeting (TransComm) in Portland, Maine. While there, INDOT Strategic Communications Director Natalie Garrett attended a session facilitated by the Illinois and Missouri DOTs, which were in the path of totality in 2017.

"I mirrored INDOT's overall eclipse communications plan based on those two states because they had such recent experiences and lessons learned," said Garrett.

Starting in November 2023, the Strategic Communications team began attending monthly AASHTO **Solar Eclipse Communications** Task Force meetings to brainstorm and share strategies and materials between states.

INDOT partnered with the Indiana State Police in mid-February to issue a news release that prepared motorists with more than a dozen ways to plan and prepare for potential traffic impacts before, during and after the eclipse. The two agencies are also working to produce related video content to share on social media.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Transportation

National Social Work Month

March is National Social Work Month, and the Department of **Child Services** takes extra care this time of year to acknowledge and thank those who choose to dedicate



their careers to helping others. DCS team members lead the response to allegations of child abuse and neglect, with a focus on the development, survival and overall well-being of families in the community. We are thankful to staff and all social workers who fight to help people navigate a complex, fast-paced world. They are educated and trained to fight through societal barriers we alone might not be strong enough to tackle, and without their work, we wouldn't be where we are today – a world more aware of mental health stigmas, poverty and abuse.

This year, the National Association of Social Workers chose the theme "Empowering Social Workers." The goal is to provide the resources, tools and support so social workers can pour their efforts back into society to make it a better place. Their work may be selfless, but that doesn't mean they can do it alone.

The Department of Child Services is empowering social workers with the help of Rutgers University by launching its new Worker2Worker program. Only the second of its kind (the first launched in New Jersey), this program provides emotional and wellness support to those on the front lines of child welfare. The first part of this initiative is

staffed with retired case workers. DCS staff can connect with those who have walked in their shoes and receive an empathetic ear. These retired staff have the emotional capacity, training and experience to help guide current staff through challenges their role may bring. It shows that, even when they hang up their hats, social workers feel called to help others.

DCS and Rutgers will also roll out other opportunities for staff to focus on their well-being through webinars, support groups, newsletters and more. These resources, alongside the current support systems in place, will help reduce turnover and burnout of DCS case workers.

This month, if you know or see a social worker, ask them if you could help with anything! They do so much for us every day, and they deserve a time where WE could help THEM. Thank you again, social workers, for making our society and communities better, for pouring your heart into your work, and for providing unwavering dedication to the well-being of others.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Child Services

The moon tree of the Indiana Statehouse

As I wrapped up an interview with Rene Stanley, Bailey Hinton-Matthews and Jeanette Goben at the statehouse, I asked if they had anything else they'd like to share about its history. A smile spread across Stanley's face. "Are you aware of the moon tree?" She asked. I shook my head. I'd never heard of a moon tree, much less one at the Indiana Statehouse.

"It's one of my favorite things," Stanley said, and I listened as she began to tell the story.

Turning back the clock to February 1971, the astronauts aboard the Apollo 14 mission prepared to complete their objectives in the Fra Mauro region of the moon. Their mission involved orbital science, geological investigations of the lunar field, deep-space photography and other tests to better understand our solar system. In addition to the equipment they needed for their mission, each astronaut was allowed to bring a personal preference kit or PPK. These kits could be used to pack personal items like photos from home or bring home personal souvenirs from space. But Stuart A. Roosa, a Command Module Pilot for the mission, had filled his with tree seeds—thousands of them.

Roosa was a former smoke jumper for the U.S. Forest Service in the 1950s and before his mission's launch, the Chief of the Forest Service contacted him about a special project. He wanted Roosa to take seeds for Douglas firs, loblolly pines, redwoods, sweetgums and sycamores in his personal kit to see how deep space would affect the seeds. Roosa agreed and geneticist Stan Krugman selected the seeds that would fly with him as well as

control seeds that would remain on Earth.

Roosa kept the seeds safe for 34 orbits around the moon and successfully touched down with them after a nine-day mission. He then submitted them for quarantine (in case of any contamination from being in space), but the pressure change in the isolation chamber was too much. The bag containing them burst, scattering the seeds and dashing the hopes of the scientists that wanted to study them. It was doubtful they would be able to successfully germinate the seeds, but they were determined to try.

The first attempt seemed promising at the start. The seeds started to grow but the facility where they were germinated didn't have the proper conditions to keep them alive. The scientists forged ahead, and further attempts were made in Gulfport, Mississippi and Placerville, California. Eventually over 400 saplings were grown successfully. The U.S. Forest Service sent out a letter to state foresters to let them know the saplings were available. From there, they found new homes across the country.

Fast forward nearly half a century and many of the moon trees are still growing strong. They appear the same as any other trees of their species, giving no indication that they've been thousands of miles above the Earth. Three call Indiana home. One is located in Cannelton at the Camp Koch Girl Scout Camp, another in Lincoln City at Lincoln State Park and the last is right in the center of Indianapolis.



The Indiana Statehouse moon tree, located on the east side of the building.

Stanley paused her story and led me outside to show me the statehouse's verv own moon tree. The sycamore stands tall and proud on the east side of the building where it's stood since April 9, 1976, meaning the 2024 solar eclipse will take place almost exactly 48 years later. It's one of many things that makes the Indiana Statehouse special.

A special thank you to IDOA employees Rene Stanley, Jeanette Goben, and Bailey Hinton-Matthews who shared this story and more about the Indiana Statehouse. Read more from their interview in this previous story from the Torch. And you can find a full list of moon trees across the country here.

Article submitted by Mack Breneman, Indiana State Personnel Department



Dental & vision exams: About more than your teeth and eyes

When we think about preventive healthcare, we often think of things like an annual physical, a cancer screening, a vaccine or a flu shot. While those are important preventive care measures we should take, we often forget about preventive care for our eyes and teeth.

Dental and vision plans are a vital part of our comprehensive health benefits—and both plans have preventive care built into them. We do that because some chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, cancer and heart disease can first show symptoms in the mouth or eyes. And, of course, regular dental exams can detect cavities, severe gum disease, or tooth loss, while annual vision exams can identify changes in eyesight, cataracts, glaucoma or retinal detachment.

For all of these possible conditions, the sooner you know, the easier and less costly it will be to treat. Just consider this:

- State of Indiana employees who didn't have a dental cleaning in the past three years had a 62% higher out-of-pocket expense when seeking follow-up dental care.
- · Employees who had regular dental cleanings had only a 3% out-of-pocket cost increase.

Below are key things to know about our dental and vision exams including how you can get rewarded for checking preventive care off your list each year!

Dental

- What's covered: Two routine dental exams and cleanings a year, plus a bitewing X-ray and a full-mouth (or panoramic) X-ray once every three years. See Full Chart of What's Covered.
- Cost: Covered at 100% when you visit a dentist in your plan's network
- Wellness reward: \$50 (you and your spouse each)
- Find a provider:
 - Go to anthem.com/find-care
 - Complete the basic search fields
 - Select plan/network: Dental: **Dental Complete**
 - Input city, county or zip to narrow your search

Vision

- What's covered: Annual fullservice exam plus allowance for frames (every two years) or contact lenses. See Full Chart of What's Covered.
- Cost: \$10 exam copay with innetwork provider; \$25 copay for lenses; additional costs for any lens enhancements
- Wellness reward: \$50 (you and your spouse each)
- Find a provider:
 - Go to anthem.com/find-care
 - Complete the basic search
 - Select plan/network: Blue **View Vision Select**
 - Input city, county or zip to narrow your search

Invest In Your Health website >

Do you have a primary care provider?

A primary care doctor can serve as your medical home—diagnosing and treating a range of conditions, referring you to specialists as needed and helping monitor your overall health. If you don't have a primary care provider, you can find one in the Anthem network in two ways.

- Option 1: Log in at <u>anthem.com</u> and choose the Find Care tab.
- Option 2: Download the Sydney Health mobile app. Once it's added to your phone, log in and select Find Care.

We encourage you to find a Tier 1 HealthSync provider—you'll benefit from quality care AND lower costs. Anthem's provider directory lists the tier next to each provider's name.



Ortholndy named preferred orthopedic provider for State of Indiana employees

We are happy to announce a new partnership with Ortholody, the state's preferred provider for high-quality and cost-effective orthopedic care. After careful evaluation, we found Orthology delivers exceptional outcomes at significantly lower costs compared to other Indiana orthopedic care providers.

Why Choose Ortholndy?

Top-Ranked Quality:

Ortholndy is independently recognized by major employers and ranked #1 in Indiana for total joint replacement by Healthgrades in 2023 and 2024. They've also been recognized for 11 consecutive years with the Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Award, showcasing their dedication to your safety and well-being.

Cost-Savings:

Ortholndy, an Athem Tier 1 provider, offers lower costs for surgeries and other orthopedic services, saving you money through a lower deductible and out of pocket costs.

Comprehensive Care:

From urgent care and appointments to physical therapy, imaging and surgical/ non-surgical specialists, Ortholody covers your end-to-end orthopedic needs. Convenient care options include walk-in, orthopedic-only urgent care and comprehensive services all under one roof.

Ready to Get Started?

- Consider transferring your care to Ortholndy if you're currently seeing another provider.
- Schedule an appointment for urgent care or consultations with fellowship-trained specialists: Request an Appointment | Ortholndy.
- Find the Ortholndy location nearest you: Orthopedic Specialists in Indiana | Ortholndy
- Visit the Ortholody website to learn more: Ortholody Named Preferred Orthopedic Provider for State of Indiana Employees | Ortholndy Blog.

The Data:

- Lower Costs: Orthology offers 30% lower costs for services compared to the average in Indiana.
- Health Outcomes: Our quality data shows Orthology in the top 1% of orthopedic providers when compared to a national benchmark that considers patient complications, patient safety, unplanned readmission and mortality.

We believe this partnership is a win-win for everyone involved. Ortholody delivers excellent care at affordable prices, saving you money and improving your health.



Read more about the partnership >

Tips for safe viewing of the April 8 total solar eclipse

A total solar eclipse will be visible in the Hoosier State this spring, crossing North America. The rare celestial event will start during the afternoon of April 8. The total solar eclipse is literally a sight to see, but it's important to remember to take proper precautions for safe viewing. Here are some tips to help you enjoy this rare phenomenon safely.



Photo submitted by Indiana Department of Natural Resources

When is the total solar eclipse?

The total solar eclipse will take place on Monday, April 8, 2024. In Indianapolis, it will start at 3:06 p.m. EST and last for 3 minutes and 49 seconds.

How can I safely view the total solar eclipse?

The only safe way to look directly at the sun is through special-purpose solar filters used in "eclipse glasses" or in hand-held solar viewers. Improvised or makeshift solutions like regular sunglasses, smoked glass or exposed film negatives are not a safe alternative.

Where can I find solar eclipse glasses?

Be sure to avoid counterfeit glasses. Only use eclipse glasses or solar viewers that meet the ISO 12312-2 standards. You can buy glasses online here: eclipse.aas.org/ resources/solar-filters.

When can I remove my glasses?

The only time you can look at the sun without a solar viewer is during totality. When the moon completely covers the sun's face and it suddenly gets dark, you can (very briefly) remove your solar filter to watch. As soon as the bright sun begins to reappear, creating a crescent on the opposite side of the moon, immediately use your solar viewer again to watch the remaining partial phase of the eclipse. Get more eye safety tips here.

How do I know if I damaged my eyes during the eclipse?

If your eyes feel a little funny after an eclipse, it may not be a sign of solar retinopathy. Damage from the eclipse is unlikely to cause pain or discomfort in your eyes. Instead, you may notice visual symptoms within four to six hours, although some may notice symptoms 12 hours to days later.

What are the symptoms of eye damage from an eclipse?

If you are concerned that you may have sustained damage, here are some symptoms to look out for:

- Blurry vision
- Headache
- A blind spot in your central vision in one or both eyes
- Increased sensitivity to light
- Distorted vision
- Changes in the way you see color

How is solar retinopathy treated?

There is no specific treatment for solar retinopathy, but it is important to see your ophthalmologist if you experience difficulties with your vision after the eclipse. An ophthalmologist will take a scan of the eye to see the extent of any damage. Most people recover after three to six months, although permanent vision loss can occur.

For more information go to:

- in.gov/dhs/solar-eclipse-2024/
- in.gov/dhs/solar-eclipse-2024/ files/TSE24-Eye-Protection.pdf
- in.gov/dhs/solar-eclipse-2024/ files/idoh-solar-retinopathyguidelines.pdf

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Health

The eyes have it!

Spring is finally here, and the first blooms of the season are starting to make an appearance. With so much to see and experience with the change of season, it is important to take time to consider eye health and wellness. March is Workplace Eye Wellness Month, making it a great time to review how you can protect yourself and your eyesight.

Digital eye strain can be common among office and remote workers, and can cause symptoms such as tired, burning, or itching eyes, dry eyes, blurred vision, and headache. To reduce digital eye strain, workers can:

 Place screens 20-26 inches away, and a little below eve level.

- Adjust the lighting on screens and in the room to reduce glare and increase contrast.
- Follow the 20-20-20 rule, where every 20 minutes look 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Consider using computer glasses that block blue light and reduce eye strain.
- Break up long sedentary periods with breaks such as a stretch break or walk.
- Use eye drops to help with dry eyes.

For workers in other environments like construction and manufacturing, eye injuries are typically a result of hazards such as flying or falling objects, tools, chemicals, and/ or particles and sparks. In these

workplaces, proper eye protection is paramount, and must be provided by employers when hazardous conditions exist. Safety eyewear includes non-prescription and prescription safety glasses, goggles, face shields, welding helmets and full-face respirators. For more information on eye health and wellness, visit PreventBlindness. org. For questions about eye safety in the workplace, contact INSafe at insafe@dol.in.gov or visit osha.gov/ eye-face-protection.

Article submitted by Emily Kauffamn, Indiana Department of Labor

Stories of the 1974 Tornado Outbreak

April 3-4 will mark the 50th anniversary of the 1974 Tornado Super Outbreak. This key event in U.S. weather history saw 148 tornadoes across 13 states. More than 300 people were killed. Significant improvements in weather technology and systems developed in the aftermath of the storms.

In Indiana, there were 21 tornadoes during the outbreak. About 1,000 Hoosiers were injured and 47 died.

To commemorate this anniversary, IDHS is gathering Hoosiers' memories and stories about the outbreak. Please share yours on the Remembering the 1974 Tornado Super Outbreak form, and then share the form link (on.in.gov/1974outbreak-memories) with your colleagues and communities. Submissions will be presented in an interactive online format as the anniversary approaches.







IDOH celebrates public health

Public health advocates from across Indiana gathered at the Statehouse on Feb. 22 for the second annual Public Health Day.

The event was held to celebrate the important role public health plays in Hoosiers' daily lives and to learn more about efforts underway to improve how services are delivered around the state.

Public health heroes who are championing the biggest public health transformation in Indiana in decades were honored at the event:

- Public Health Hero Mindy Waldron, Allen County
- Public Health Service -Vanderburgh County Health Department
- Public Health Partnership - Daviess County Health Department and Purdue **Extension-Daviess County**
- Public Health Impact Henry **County Health Department**
- State Health Commissioner Award – Sen. Luke Kenley
- State Health Commissioner Award - Dr. Judy Monroe
- State Health Commissioner Award - Sen. Ed Charbonneau
- State Health Commissioner Award – Rep. Brad Barrett

Former State Sen. Luke Kenley and Dr. Judy Monroe, a former state health commissioner who serves as CEO of the CDC Foundation, were among the hundreds in attendance. Both served as co-chairs for the Governor's Public Health Commission, which conducted a months-long examination of Indiana's public health system. The commission's work was the foundation for Health First Indiana (HFI), the state's initiative created by SEA 4, legislation passed by the



2023 Indiana General Assembly that provides funding so counties can determine the health needs of their communities and implement evidence-based programs based on prevention. The legislation was authored by Sen. Ed Charbonneau and sponsored by Rep. Brad Barrett. The goal of HFI is to make sure every Hoosier has access to the core public health services to achieve their optimal health and well-being.

Representatives from the Indiana Hospital Association and Indiana Chamber of Commerce both spoke at the event about their commitment to supporting public health efforts throughout Indiana, calling on healthcare systems and employers across the state to pledge their support for this initiative. The pledge is a collaboration between healthcare organizations and businesses to help Hoosiers reach their optimal health and communities thrive.

Many of those in attendance wore blue or gold to show their support for public health.

"The unprecedented Health First Indiana support has given local health departments new opportunities to create partnerships and improve health outcomes for Hoosiers," said State Health Commissioner Lindsay Weaver, M.D., FACEP. "This event is a celebration of public health in Indiana as communities across the state come together to make a difference."

More information on Health First Indiana is available at healthfirstindiana.in.gov. Check out photos from the second annual Public Health Day here.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Health

State Employees can earn three badges in data literacy from **Indiana MPH**

The Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH) released the last set of lessons in the Data Proficiency Program in December. Those who complete the final lessons can now earn their Level 3 - Gold Badge, completing the collection of the green, blue and gold badges.

If you've not started your data proficiency journey, start working

towards improving your data knowledge and skills when you visit the Data Proficiency Program Home.

By completing this free training program, you'll gain important knowledge and skills for dealing with and making sense of data. The series covers different topics in data literacy, like understanding different data types, exploring where data comes from, learning about data in charts and graphs and learning some basic data analysis techniques. We hope you take away an understanding that the collection, organization and analysis of data is



a part of all state employees' daily activities and future.

The lessons are located on the MPH website and include videos from Arizona State University's Study Hall: Data Literacy series on YouTube and some extra reading links. Badges are earned by taking the quiz at the end of each series that's available via Microsoft Forms through your state employee account.

As of February 2024, Indiana MPH has issued over 3,200 badges to State employees! Get started today on earning yours.

Artwork by Kathy Lloyd (Indiana Family and Social Services Administration)









SEE THE TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE IN INDIANA

On April 8, 2024, Indiana will experience a total solar eclipse. This event is the perfect opportunity to make memories that last a lifetime. Don't miss out on this opportunity to be a part of history in the making! PLAN YOUR ECLIPSE ADVENTURE



GWIT Summit March 13



Welcoming all that work in state government to the annual Government Women in Technology (GWIT) Summit!

As trailblazers of the first Employee Resource Group at the State of Indiana, GWIT warmly invites you to join our upcoming event and partake in the celebration of International Women's Day.

Scheduled for March 13 from noon to 1:30 p.m., on Teams, this Summit promises to be a compelling exploration of the transformative

potential of technology for public service impact, guided by the theme "Tech for Good."

It will be an insightful and inspiring celebration, shedding light on how women are at the forefront of creating positive change in the tech industry and contributing to the betterment of Hoosiers. Your participation in this landmark event is not only encouraged but valued, as we collectively shape the future of technology within our state government.

> Click here for more information >

Nominate your mentor for a shout out

Has someone gone above and beyond guiding you in your career? We want to hear about your mentors and what sets them apart. To submit a shout out that may be featured on the State of Indiana's social media pages or in publications like The Torch, fill out the form below.

Nominate your mentor >









Artwork by Dwayne Caldwell (Indiana Department of **Environmental Management)**

ILEA's 232 class leads by example: Donating blood to save lives

Basic students from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy's 232 class learn the importance of giving back to their communities early in their training. The class donated 80 units of blood at a blood drive sponsored by the ILEA on February 7, 2024. The blood products donated can save up to three lives per donor.

According to the Red Cross, blood donations are used for patients in need of surgery, cancer treatment and transfusions for blood loss from traumatic injuries.



Blood and platelets cannot be manufactured, they can only come from volunteer donors. Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood and or platelets.

ILEA is proud of the volunteer spirit with the 232 class. Their next volunteer project involves the Special Olympics Polar Plunge. Stay tuned for more updates in the April issue of the Torch.







March 16 & 23, 2024

When the Sun Goes Dark | Chain O'Lakes State Park

During a total solar eclipse, the sun is entirely covered by the moon, letting viewers catch a glimpse of the Sun's rarely seen outer atmosphere. Participants will learn all about the upcoming solar eclipse, how to safely view it, and will get to decorate their own eclipse viewing glasses to take home, as supplies last.

More Information >

March 23, 2024

Total Solar Eclipse Painting | Fort Harrison State park

Learn about what an eclipse is, how to safely view it, the best viewing spots in the park and what to expect for the day while we paint a total solar eclipse.

More Information >

March 30, 2024

Sky Trivia, Solar Eclipse Edition | O'Bannon Woods State Park

While we are enjoying the weekend and patiently waiting for the eclipse on Monday, come and test your knowledge about the eclipse and other sky features at the Nature Center on Saturday at 10:30 a.m.

More Information >

April 5, 2024

Scary Stories: Solar Eclipse Style | O'Bannon Woods State Park

Join us at the Nature Center at 7 p.m. for some scary stories related to the sky.

More Information >

April 6, 2024

Eclipse Craft At the Amphitheater | Hardy Lake

Join the Naturalist at the Amphitheater for this eclipse themed Craft.

More Information >

Solar Eclipse STEM Lab | Potato **Creek State Park**

What is a solar eclipse? Why don't we always see one? Come to the Nature Center to learn all your burning solar questions in this hands-on experiment.

More Information >

Total Eclipse 2024: The 1869 Eclipse | Paynetown State **Recreation Area**

The last time that the Bloomington area saw a total eclipse was August 1869. Locals awaited the event with anticipation, and the Bloomington Progress proclaimed it the "sensation of the day." We'll look at how area newspapers covered the lead up to and reactions after this notable event. More Information >

Sun and Moon Night Hike | Potato **Creek State Park**

Learn cool facts at the sun, moon, and earth on this luminated trail. Start at the Nature Center begin. Please bring flashlights. This hike takes 30 minutes to complete. More Information >

April 7, 2024

Celestial Suncatcher | Potato Creek State Park

Learn how the moon and the sun are the perfect distance away from Earth to cause a solar eclipse at the Nature Center. Capture the rays of light through this beautiful suncatcher craft.

More Information >

Buds and Blooms Hike | Paynetown State Recreation Area

Skip the morning rush and stretch your legs before the drive home... join us for an on and off-trail 60-minute hike to look at trees with new leaves and opening buds, seek out early blooming wildflowers, and enjoy other signs of spring!

More Information >

April 8, 2024

Solar Bead Bracelets at the Beach | Potato Creek State Park

Come create a solar eclipse bracelet at the Naturalist Station at the beach. We will be using UV beads ands solar eclipse charms.

More Information >

Paddle in the Path...of Totality | Patoka Lake

Join us for a unique eclipse viewing experience! Bring your canoes and kayaks for a guided viewing of the total eclipse, followed by a scenic paddle where you can learn more about Patoka Lake.

More Information >

View all DNR eclipse events >

View all DNR special events >

his North



March 23, 2024

2024 Total Solar Eclipse: Celestial **Civilizations | Limberlost State Historic Site**

Join us for a prelude to the total solar eclipse as we question how early humans utilized the sun, moon and stars. From calendars and navigation to religion and ceremonies, we'll also look at how events like eclipses were perceived and explained to the common man. More Information >

April 6, 2024

The Prophet and His Prediction: An **Eclipse Story Lecture | Vincennes State Historic Site**

Guest speaker Richard Day will give an entertaining and engaging program about Tecumseh, the prophet, and the prophet's "prediction" of an eclipse in 1806. This solidified his spiritual standing among the different Native American warriors and set the wheels of history in motion toward Tippecanoe and Tecumseh's death in the War of 1812.

More Information >

April 7, 2024

Solar Explorers | Lanier Mansion State Historic Site

Blast off your pre-eclipse experience by learning about the hottest solar research today! Dr. Greg Robison of Hanover College will present current solar scientific research and we'll view the sun through a telescope on the lawn of the mansion. You're invited to join Dr. Robison at Hanover College's observatory that evening to view the night sky. More Information >

April 8, 2024

Total Solar Eclipse Celebration | **Indiana State Museum**

Join us for a day full of hands-on activities, live demonstrations, fun facts, collaborative art and science experiences and more. Receive a free pair of solar viewing glasses, while supplies last, or purchase a pair in the Indiana Store, then learn how to safely view this rare celestial phenomenon.

More Information >

Eclipse Day Crafts | Whitewater Canal

Children will learn about the oncein-a-lifetime celestial event through craft-making using corona coloring activity sheets. There will also be fun eclipse demonstrations including spinning sun, Earth and moon models at the Grist Mill.

More Information >

Solarbration: VIP Eclipse Event | Indiana State Museum

Join an exclusive and intimate VIP event! You'll have access to our balcony with a direct line of sight to the total solar eclipse. Included in your ticket is reserved parking in the White River State Park garage, admission to the Indiana State Museum and our eclipse programming, a bar with specialty drinks and cocktails, eclipse-themed hors d'oeuvres and official solar eclipse viewing glasses.

More Information >

Total Solar Eclipse at New Harmony State Historic Site

Visitors can enjoy multiple prime viewing locations, glasses available for purchase (while supplies last) and activities for the whole family, including making a horizontal sundial and a pocket solar system. More Information >

Total Solar Eclipse at Angel Mounds State Historic Site

Join your fellow eclipse enthusiasts and experience this once-in-alifetime celestial event at a site specifically designed to align with the sun and moon! We will have everything you need to watch the eclipse in style, including the glasses and a spectacular view.

More Information >

Total Solar Eclipse at T.C. Steele **State Historic Site**

Walk-up activities for children and families will be offered including an outdoor stomp rocket station, spacethemed sensory bins, solar system puzzles and a sun, Earth and moon orbital model to explore.

More Information >

Total Solar Eclipse at Limberlost State Historic Site

Set up your camp chairs and blankets on the cabin grounds and adjacent open field. Space is firstcome, first-served. Join our Site Naturalist Curt Burnette at 1:30 p.m. in the visitor center as he shares how animals react to natural events like the total eclipse.

More Information >

View all Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites events >

Your well-being is important to us

We may call with information that can help you be healthier

If you receive a phone call from our health and wellness team members, it's because we want to share important health information or appointment reminders. We may also let you know about programs to improve your wellbeing. Our calls are always confidential.

Topics you can discuss with us

Together, we can talk about your health concerns, such as losing weight, quitting smoking, preparing for surgery, or making healthier life choices. For example, if you're expecting a baby, we might introduce you to a supportive program that can help you enjoy a healthier pregnancy. The programs we suggest are available at no cost, and we will explain how they work with your benefits. We might also call to discuss a recent emergency room visit, new diagnosis or recent hospitalization or discharge.

Keep in mind:

- We aren't selling anything We only call when we can help with suggestions or programs that are already included in your health benefits.
- We'll ask to verify your name and date of birth Your health information is confidential. That's why it's important for us to make sure we're only sharing it with you.

We're here to help you feel supported in making the best decisions for your health.

If you need to reach us, call the Member Services number on the back of your member ID card. If you would prefer to not receive calls, let us know.

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March 2024: Tips for well-being

Setbacks happen. Get right back on track.

Did you plan some big, healthy changes at the start of the year? If you went off track at some point, don't sweat it. You don't have to get stuck on a setback. Just try to get back to your plan as soon as possible.

Let's say your goal was to improve your fitness. You planned to ride your bike three times each week after work. Then, some unexpected commitments popped up. You ran out of time and energy to work out.

Don't give up on your goal altogether. Just start the next week with a fresh, positive attitude.*

A setback is just a detour, not the end of the road.

Focus on what you plan to do this week, not what you didn't do in the past. Think about why you set your healthy goal in the first place. The results are more important than how long it takes to get there.

Be open to making changes to get the results you want. Is it easier to work out in the morning or at lunchtime? Adjust your plan to fit your real life.

Check out more tips like these to help you get back on track:**

- Be patient. Habits don't change overnight. It can take time to see results. Just keep moving forward.
- Write it down. Try tracking what food you eat each day. This can help you see what you'd like to work on.
- Ask for support from the caring people who want you to succeed. Text or call your team when you need a boost.

Wellness Webinar: Healthy habits: keep the change***

Trying to stay on track with new, healthy changes? Join our coach for tips to move past setbacks and go for your goals.

Tuesday, March 19, 2024 10:00 AM | 12:30 PM | 4:30 PM, ET



Save your spot

- * FOR HEALTHY LIVING SOURCE: National Institutes of Health, "Creating healthy habits: make better choices easier." March 2018. Accessed Jan. 31, 2024.
- ** FOR HEALTHY LIVING SOURCE: American Heart Association, "Redefining failure: how to overcome setbacks." Jan. 25, 2024. Accessed Jan. 31, 2024.
- *** The wellness webinar classes are not offered in Spanish.

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