



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Memorandum

Date: March 26, 2024
To: Municipal/County CAO/CEMCs, LTCH, RH, additional partners
From: Coordinator, Emergency Preparedness and Foundational Standards
Subject: Solar Eclipse Resources

On Monday, April 8, 2024, there will be a solar eclipse. Renfrew County and District Health Unit's (RCDHU) catchment area is just north of the path of totality (the path traced on Earth's surface by the Moon's shadow during a total solar eclipse). Our catchment area will experience a partial eclipse. RCDHU has created a resource webpage with safety information that is currently available to the public. It can be accessed by visiting <https://www.rcdhu.com/healthy-living/emergency-preparedness/solar-eclipse/>.

RCDHU will be sharing messaging on social media a few days before the solar eclipse and during the solar eclipse. RCDHU encourages you to share the posted social media messages on your organization's social media pages leading up to and during the event.

It is encouraged that your organization evaluates the risk to your employees and plans accordingly.

Please see the following key messages, as provided by the Ministry of Health.

Key general messages are as follows:

- It is not safe to look at the Sun without approved eye protection. Regular sunglasses will not protect people's eyes.
- Looking at even a small sliver before or after the eclipse without approved eye protection can be harmful to your vision.
- Glasses with specialized filters adhering to the ISO 12312-2 international standard can be worn to prevent eye damage.
- Glasses should be inspected for wrinkles or scratches ahead of use and should not be used if damaged.
- Ensure that "eclipse glasses" fully cover your field of vision.

- Put on glasses when looking away from the Sun, then look at the eclipse. Look away from the Sun before taking glasses off.
- Children should always be supervised during eclipses as they may not fully comprehend the risks involved.

Key eye health messaging:

- It is not safe to look at the Sun without approved eye protection. Regular sunglasses will not protect people's eyes.
- Health impacts may include retinal burns, blurred vision, and loss of eyesight (immediate or delayed onset).
- Regular sunglasses will not protect people's eyes.
- It is not safe to view the eclipse through a camera/phone lens, telescope, binoculars, or any other optical device.
- If approved eye protection is not available, alternative viewing strategies should be considered, such as [an eclipse box](#) or a [LiveSteam](#).
- Eye damage may not be immediately apparent, and symptoms can take 12-48 hours to appear.

Remember, if you begin to experience temporary vision loss, blurred vision or eyesight loss, during or after the event, speak to your eye care professional (e.g., optometrist) or your health care provider as soon as possible. If you are experiencing blindness after viewing the eclipse (immediate or delayed), seek emergency care immediately.

If you have any further questions, please call 613-732-3629, extension 505 or email environmentalhealth@rcdhu.com.

Warm regards,

Melissa Botz