

The Source Information Radio Newsletter (August 2017)

Published by Information Station Specialists (theRADIOsource.com)

Eclipse Excesses Expected

But Authorities Vow that the Public's Safety Will Not Be Overshadowed

SUBLETTE COUNTY, WY, DOVER, TN: Who knows what might go haywire when millions crowd into a 70-mile-wide corridor that extends from Oregon to the Carolinas to experience two minutes of daytime darkness. It all happens this Monday when a rare total solar eclipse will sweep the moon's shadow across a dozen states in a matter of hours. That's right. It moves from coast to coast fast – at more than 1600 MPH. And public safety officials are moving to stay ahead of it.

Jim Mitchell, the emergency manager at Sublette County, Wyoming, leveraged a cooperative agreement to borrow three **RadioSTAT portable information radio stations** (www.theRADIOsource.com/products/radiostat.htm) from neighboring Sweetwater County to keep eclipse visitors apprised since, so many of them will be in position to listen in their vehicles. "We will be directing them via large electronic message boards to tune in to the frequency," states Mitchell.

The special broadcasts will inform the incoming about special traffic plans and how they can find a public information center being set up for the event. Public information officers will even have the opportunity to broadcast live, if the situation requires it.

Fort Donelson National Battlefield near Dover, Tennessee, finds itself in the totality tunnel as well and will use its on-site TIS station to direct and inform what could be an avalanche of visitors. Broadcasts will tell those entering about special gate hours, traffic and parking rules, eclipse-related programs and sun viewing safety reminders. The eclipse will become total at Dover just before 1:30 PM. The staff expects to close the gates by 12:30 or when parking areas are full.

Emergency management officials across the US are concerned about traffic gridlock, pedestrian accidents caused by sun-watchers gazing on the shoulders and crashes due to what could be very distracted driving. A larger concern may be what happens to traffic after the eclipse is through, as millions hustle back to hotels and homes simultaneously. Then, of course, there is the potential for overloaded services, such as fire/EMS/911 and gasoline supplies that may not be able to keep up with demand.

Of course there's cellular service. What do you think will happen when 50,000 amateur astronomers in the same county try to text photos back home, all at the same time? Officials are expecting cellular service to go dark in places.

They say that an eclipse of this magnitude will not occur again in our lifetimes. We have heard from some public safety officials who think that would be just fine.

Pirates Face Headwinds

FCC Attempting to Sink Radio Pirates One by One

WASHINGTON, DC: The FCC's Enforcement Bureau – the one that makes it its mission to evict pirates from the public airwaves – is having a time of it this year. Blimey! The Commission has stepped up its efforts under the new administration to issue "Notices of Unlicensed Operation" and "Notices of Apparent Liability" (fines) to individuals and groups who are caught on the air without a license.

FCC Commissioner Riley in a recent speech referred to pirates as "squatters who are infecting the radio band." There are a lot of them. More than 200 FCC actions were directed against pirates in 2016. On August 14th of 2017 alone, nine such notices were issued, eight of them in Florida, a perennial pirate hot-spot. On a recent visit to the Enforcement Bureau office in that state, Riley admitted that the Commission's failure to act against them only undermines its credibility. It also has created a backlog:

Prime examples of pirate pillaging include:

___ An unlicensed television station that has been on the air for 20 years was levied a \$144,344.00 fine – finally.

___ A clandestine FM station called "Big Link Radio 97.5" that was run by a man in Patterson, New Jersey. He received a \$25,000 fine. Arrgh! The man had evaded the Commission by moving the station house-to-house in a game of "whack-a-mole" that lasted for years.

The Enforcement Bureau states that currently 20% of its time is devoted to eliminating pirates, now that it has again become a priority.

No Phishing Allowed

Are internet threat messages appropriate in a TIS broadcast?

ATLANTA, GA: When the Federal Communications Commission wrote the rules that govern the Travelers Information Radio Service (TIS) in 1977, it could not have imagined that broadcast messages would include the topic of internet security.

What is an internet?

But because the rules for TIS lie in Part 90, which allow station operators to use their radio systems to protect life and property when threatened, it is logical that such property could include the intellectual as well as the physical. An email "inbox" loaded with opportunities for a "phisherman" to land a catch. Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson Airport broadcast the following message internally via their phone system this week about a phishing attack being sustained by the City's employees:

"A phishing attempt has been made on the City of Atlanta email system. A phishing email that requests an electronic signature, invoice payment or urgent\important request has been received by several city employees....

Customers are asked to not open or click any links or attachments within the email, not even from your mobile device. If you receive the email please delete it immediately."

As a result of the incident, the question was raised: "Would such a message be allowed on a Travelers Information Station like the one the Airport operates in Atlanta on AM 830?"

Based on a plain reading of the rules in **FCC Part 90.405** (www.theRADIOsource.com/downloads/fcc-rules.pdf), *The Source* believes the answer is "yes."