

# Rose City Astronomers Star Party Etiquette

Adopted: March 3, 2014

RCA non-public star parties are intended for serious astronomy by club members and their guests. Maintaining dark adapted night vision is essential for visual observing and thus minimizing ambient light is an important aspect of maximizing observing potential. In addition, other common courtesies and precautions will enhance the observing experience for all.

Members and their guests are expected to practice the following *Star Party Etiquette* at RCA star parties, and confer with the RCA Event Coordinator if you have any questions, or any related issue or problem arises.

## Arrival, Setup and Departure

1. Please arrive early and set up your equipment before it gets dark.
2. When setting up equipment, don't use more space than you reasonably need.
3. If arriving after dark, make sure to turn off your headlights and parking lights and mask all other lights that can't be turned off **prior** to driving into the observing area.
4. If you will be leaving while it is still dark,
  - a. Park with your vehicle's headlights pointing away from the observing field, and cover all vehicle lighting that can't be turned off.
  - b. Drive away with headlights and parking lights OFF. Only turn on your lights after leaving the observing area.
  - c. If you feel it is too dark to safely drive yourself out of the observing field, ask someone to guide you.

## Lights

5. After dark, all vehicle lights (headlights, parking lights, tail lights, brake lights, interior dome lights, etc.) should remain off or be taped to reduce/eliminate their light.
6. All exterior RV, trailer, and camper lights should remain off after dark. Interior lighting should be dim red only and all windows and doors shielded to prevent light from escaping.
7. Avoid locking your car if locking/unlocking causes your lights to flash or horn to honk, and put your keys someplace where you won't inadvertently activate the locks or set off your car alarm.
8. Observers and guests may use red flashlights dimmed as much as possible while still being able to see. Even red light can be objectionable if too bright.
9. Computer screens, cell phones and any other light-emitting device should be dimmed, masked and shielded to block obtrusive light (low brightness, night mode and red plastic work best but even red light can be objectionable if too bright).
10. In the event you must give off some light, **give a yell** so folks can cover their eyes or turn off a camera.

## Miscellaneous

11. Astronomy is a quiet, peaceful activity. Avoid loud and boisterous behavior.
12. Use headphones or get consent from your observing neighbors prior to listening to music.
13. Green laser pointers are not allowed, except by permission of the RCA Event Coordinator.
14. Ask for permission before touching anyone else's equipment.
15. Pets are best left at home, but if you must bring your pet please make sure they are on a leash, under control and quiet at all times. Also, make sure that they do their business away from campsites and the observing field and that you clean up after your pet.
16. Smoking and alcohol are not allowed in the observing area during observing hours, or around any telescope equipment at any time. Be aware that alcohol may adversely affect your night vision, body temperature and ability to drive safely.