



Florida Department of Transportation

JEB BUSH
GOVERNOR

719 S. Woodland Blvd.
DeLand, FL 32720

DENVER J. STUTLER, JR.
SECRETARY



For Immediate Release

For more information:
Steve Homan, FDOT
Director of Public Information, District 5
(386) 943-5479

NEW 511 REAL-TIME TRAVEL INFORMATION SERVICE **NOW COVERS ENTIRE STATE OF FLORIDA**

Nation's top highway official to speak at Orlando launch demonstration today, Nov. 17

ORLANDO, FL, NOV. 17 – For the first time, motorists everywhere in the state can get real-time traffic information on the interstates and Florida's Turnpike by calling one simple number, 511. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 5 is unveiling the first statewide 511 travel information service that will provide construction updates, lane closures, traffic incidents, severe weather reports and Amber alerts for child abductions. This is a free service though cell phone minutes may apply. Also, for the first time, Florida drivers will be able to plan their travel based on current congestion reports and current conditions available at the new statewide Web site, www.FL511.com.

The nation's top highway official, Acting Federal Highway Administrator J. Richard Capka will attend the 511 launch event today, November 17, at 10 a.m. at Orlando's Regional Traffic Management Center, 133 South Semoran Boulevard, Orlando, FL. Capka is expected to discuss the importance of utilizing real-time transportation management systems to conserve energy and promote economic vitality. Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Denver J. Stutler, Jr. will speak about the importance of 511 to travelers statewide. A statewide PSA campaign promoting the free service and featuring Governor Jeb Bush is being unveiled.

- more -

FDOT District 5 Secretary George Gilhooley is demonstrating all the new travel information features available to drivers at the 10 a.m. event and says, "The expanded 511 system and other iFlorida components deliver more consumer-based real-time information for traffic management than anywhere else in the country. By calling 511, drivers can get information on all of the major corridors so that they can choose the path that best fits their needs. I know it lessens my stress when I use 511 right now and hopefully it will lessen the stress of other Florida drivers as they are able to plan ahead and make better travel decisions, now that they have access to more information than ever before."

The new statewide 511 calling system offers those traveling through Florida or commuting across several counties the ability to access traffic information for all Florida interstate highways and Florida's Turnpike. The system emphasizes construction updates, lane closures and severe weather alerts. Callers can easily transfer from the statewide system into the Central Florida, Southeast Florida or Tampa Bay 511 systems for more detailed information in each region.

Travel information for the following highways is now available through the new statewide 511 system: I-4, I-10, I-75, I-95, I-110, I-175, I-195, I-275, I-295, I-375, I-395, I-595 and Florida's Turnpike. Drivers have a choice of hearing information through a voice recognition or touchtone-activated menu.

The new Web site, www.FL511.com, is also available to drivers for the first time. The site delivers all of the information available on the statewide 511 phone system including lane closures, construction updates, severe weather alerts and evacuation information. From the statewide site, drivers can link to the Central Florida, Tampa Bay or Southeast Florida 511 regional systems which feature many additional services including traffic cameras, travel times and alternate routes.

The new, free statewide 511 service is part of the iFlorida project, a national model deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). In March 2003, FDOT was selected by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to receive a \$10 million grant to implement iFlorida, including expansion of the existing 511 system in Central Florida and implementation of the system statewide. FDOT is contributing more than \$8 million in matching state, local and

- more -

private sector funds. The iFlorida project is designed to manage the transportation network to make it more secure, reliable and efficient while delivering real-time information so travelers can decide for themselves how to make the best use of the transportation system.

“We've made a major commitment to Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in Florida to improve our transportation network,” said Governor Bush. “This advanced use of technology will produce real-time results in moving people and goods quicker, safer and more efficiently across our state.”

The name iFlorida was chosen because it represents the four “i’s” of information, integration, intelligence and innovation. The FHWA will use a two year evaluation period to establish best practices in Intelligent Transportation System deployment and will create a model for other states and jurisdictions across the country to emulate. During the length of the project, additional features will continue to be integrated into the system.

Florida stands out as a national leader of 511 usage for traffic information. As of September 2005, approximately 11.2 million calls have been made to the three regional systems (Central Florida, Southeast Florida and Tampa Bay) since they came on-line. This call volume equates to approximately 28 percent of the national total of more than 40.1 million calls.

###

For more information:
Steve Homan, FDOT
Director of Public Information, District 5
(386) 943-5479