



NEWS RELEASE

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Florida's Turnpike Enterprise to prepare for hurricane and emergency communications during annual amateur radio "Field Day" June 24-25

FORT LAUDERDALE — Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) is adding a new initiative to its hurricane and emergency preparedness plan—amateur ("ham") radio communications.

From 2 p.m. Saturday, June 24, through 2 p.m. Sunday, June 25, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise will hold amateur radio "Field Day" at its Headquarters in Orlando (Turkey Lake service plaza at Milepost 263) and its Operations Center in Pompano Beach (Pompano service plaza at Milepost 65).

During Field Day, thousands of amateur radio operators across the country test their skills in setting up and operating radio communication equipment in situations where electrical power is limited or unavailable. The idea is to simulate the conditions that can occur during a hurricane, tornado or other emergency.

"When cell phones and other technologies fail, amateur radio operators step up to the plate. They have a long track record of getting the message through when phone systems, the internet or any other infrastructure is compromised," said Christopher Warren, FTE Deputy Executive Director and ham radio operator (KD4FAB). "We want to make sure that in the event of a hurricane, our recovery efforts are not hampered by a lack of communication."

(more)

As part of the Field Day activities, real-time information about traffic conditions on the Turnpike will be exchanged between the radio operators located in the Turkey Lake facility and those located in the Pompano facility.

Both groups will set up their radio equipment in the parking areas, near the Turnpike service plazas, to make it easy for the general public to view and participate in the demonstrations. Everyone is invited.

Turnpike employees who also are amateur radio operators will participate in the event along with local radio operators from south and central Florida. Amateur radio organizations that will participate include the Boca Raton Amateur Radio Association, the Florida Atlantic University Amateur Radio Club, the Hollywood Amateur Radio Club, and the Bahia Shrine Amateur Radio Unit.

Field Day was created in 1933 by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL)—the national association for amateur radio. More than 30,000 amateur radio operators across the country participated in last year’s event.