



# News Release

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## **REAL-TIME TRAFFIC INFORMATION, MOTORIST SAFETY BREAKS AND EXPANDED ROAD RANGER HOURS FEATURED ON FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE DURING THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**ORLANDO** –The Florida's Turnpike Enterprise popular free Holiday Coffee Safety Break and expanded Safety Patrol services return over the holiday travel period, Wednesday, November 22, to Monday, November 27:

### ***Before you leave home and while driving, Real-time Traffic Information Updates***

Before leaving home, motorists may look for real-time traffic information on the Turnpike's website by visiting [www.floridasturnpike.com](http://www.floridasturnpike.com). Travelers should pay careful attention to overhead lighted message boards and tune to the Highway Advisory Radio (1640 AM) for updated Turnpike traffic advisories. Flashing yellow lights on the blue Highway Advisory Radio signs indicate an important message is being broadcast. While traveling in the Orlando, South Florida and Tampa Bay regions, motorists should dial 511 for real-time regional traffic information. This information system is voice-activated; motorists should speak the name of the road they wish to use. This free service of the Florida Department of Transportation is available 24/7.

### ***Take a Coffee Safety Break on the Turnpike***

Florida's Turnpike, Florida Highway Patrol Troop K, State Farm, HMS Host and Martin Petroleum urge drivers to take a Safety Break if they become fatigued. During the heaviest travel days, motorists may stop at any 24-hour restaurant in any Turnpike Service plaza or at the Snapper Creek Citgo Convenience Store and help themselves to a free cup of coffee. In return, they must promise the attendant that they and their passengers will buckle up to *Survive the Drive*. This complimentary pick-me-up is available at the following times:

- 6 p.m., Wednesday, November 22 to 6 a.m., Thursday, November 23
- 11 p.m. Thursday, November 23, to 6 a.m. Friday, November 24
- 11 p.m. Friday, November 24, to 6 a.m. Saturday, November 25
- 11 p.m. Saturday, November 25, to 6 a.m. Sunday, November 26
- 11 p.m. Sunday, November 26, to 6 a.m. Monday, November 27.

### ***State Farm Safety Patrol Expands Hours***

The State Farm Safety Patrol Road Rangers—who regularly travel the Turnpike in specially equipped pickup trucks and provide motorists with free roadside assistance for their disabled vehicles—have now expanded their patrol times to provide continuous coverage, 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Additionally, motorist aid call boxes are located every mile along both sides of the Turnpike mainline for travelers who need police, ambulance or roadway services. These are not voice communication devices; instead, electronic signals are transmitted to the Florida Highway Patrol, which dispatches the necessary service vehicles.

Motorists may also dial \*FHP (\*347) or 911 on a cellular phone for assistance. If calling for assistance via cell phone, please be prepared to give an approximate mile-marker and travel direction to the dispatcher—especially important in remote and rural areas.

### ***Construction Suspended***

Regularly scheduled construction related lane closures and restrictions on Florida's Turnpike-operated roads are suspended from noon Wednesday, November 22, through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, November 26, in anticipation of heavy traffic volumes. Florida's Turnpike Enterprise consists of the following limited-access toll roads

- The Turnpike Mainline, extending north from Homestead in Miami-Dade County to Wildwood in Sumter County,
- The Seminole Expressway and Southern Connector (Toll 417) in Seminole, Orange and Osceola Counties,
- The Beachline Expressway West (Toll 528) in Orange County,
- The Polk Parkway (Toll 570) in Polk County,
- The Veterans Expressway and Suncoast Parkway in Hillsborough, Pasco and Hernando Counties (Toll 589),
- The Sawgrass Expressway (Toll 869) in Broward County, and
- The Daniel Webster Western Beltway (Toll 429) is southwest Orange and northwest Osceola Counties..

### ***A Friendly Reminder from Florida Highway Patrol: Buckle Up, Move Over and Survive the Drive***

The Florida Highway Patrol and Florida Department of Transportation encourage motorists to use extra caution while traveling, and to buckle up. This year's Thanksgiving Holiday begins at 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, November 22 and extends through 11:59 p.m., Sunday, November 26. Florida Highway Patrol will team up with local and county law enforcement agencies to deter three key causes of highway fatalities: speeding, impaired driving and failure to use occupant restraints.

Enhanced law enforcement during the holiday break includes DUI wolf packs, and aggressive driving and seat belt enforcement details. Aircraft will assist troopers on the road to seek out and ticket aggressive drivers. Last year, 66 people were killed in 54 crashes during the Thanksgiving Holiday. Thirty of those fatalities were alcohol-related. Twenty-seven were not wearing seatbelts in vehicles equipped with restraints (71 percent).

A new law designed to protect law enforcement and other emergency workers on Florida highways requires drivers to "move over" or "slow down" when approaching an authorized emergency vehicle stopped on a highway. In Florida, motorists are required to vacate the lane closest to the emergency vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so. This new statute applies when a motorist is traveling on an interstate or other highway with two or more lanes traveling in the same direction as the law enforcement or emergency vehicle. Motorists must slow to a speed that is 20 miles per hour less than the posted speed limit when the posted speed limit is 25 miles per hour or greater. For more information on the *Move over Act*, visit <http://www.fhp.state.fl.us/html/MoveOver.html>.

Before you drive, get more information on Florida's seat belt laws by visiting Buckle Up Florida at <http://www.buckleupflorida.com/main.htm>.

To find out more about the Florida's Turnpike Enterprise statewide system of limited-access roads, call the public information office at 800-749-PIKE (800-749-7453) visit the website at <http://www.floridasturnpike.com>.