



## FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE ENTERPRISE

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| <p>CHARLIE CRIST<br/><i>Governor</i></p> <p>STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS<br/><i>Secretary of Transportation</i></p> | <p>FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE AND STATE FARM® SAFETY PATROL<br/>OFFER FREE COFFEE AND ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE TO HELP<br/>KEEP TRAVELS SAFE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON</p> <p>CONSTRUCTION AND LANE CLOSURES SUSPENDED<br/>DECEMBER 21 TO JANUARY 2</p> | <p>Contact:<br/>Laila A. Haddad<br/>Phone: 954-934-1280</p> |
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**FORT LAUDERDALE, FL (December 20, 2007)**—In an effort to make holiday travels safe and cheerful, Florida's Turnpike and HMS Host will serve free coffee at the service plazas, and the State Farm Safety Patrol will offer free 24-hour roadside assistance during the upcoming holiday travel season. Weary holiday travelers may stop in for a free cup of coffee at any of the Turnpike's service plazas, and stranded travelers may rely on the State Farm Safety Patrol to help get them safely to their holiday destination. Dial \*FHP to request assistance while traveling on the Turnpike this holiday season.

The free coffee will be available at all eight Turnpike service plazas during the following holiday periods:

**Christmas:**

- 6 p.m., Monday, December 24, to 6 a.m., Tuesday, December 25;
- 11 p.m., Tuesday, December 25, to 6 a.m., Wednesday, December 26

**New Year's:**

- 6 p.m., Monday, December 31, to 6 a.m., Tuesday January 1,
- 11 p.m., Tuesday, January 1, to 6 a.m., Wednesday, January 2

“With so many travelers on the road, we want to do everything possible to help motorists arrive safely at their holiday destinations,” said State Farm Safety Patrol Driver Javier Villalobos, who covers the Turnpike near the Snapper Creek Service Plaza. Villalobos knows first-hand about helping motorists in need: he was honored this month with a national HERO Award\* in Baltimore, Maryland for his heroic actions last spring when he repeatedly dove into a canal to pull a driver from a submerged SUV. Trained in quick clearance and traffic control procedures, State Farm Safety Patrol drivers reduce the probability of secondary accidents and dramatically reduce traffic delays on our roadways.

In partnership with Florida's Turnpike, the State Farm® Safety Patrol provided free assistance to over 30,000 stranded motorists in 2007 on Florida's Turnpike, the Homestead Extension, and the Sawgrass Expressway. State Farm Safety Patrol drivers respond to help motorists stranded due to such problems as flat tires, dead batteries, or empty gas tanks. Drivers are also trained in first aid, CPR and the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs).

Based on the success and safety record of the program, State Farm Insurance recently extended their commitment to the State Farm Safety Patrol for an additional four years, from 2008 through 2012.

## 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.

Motorists should expect heavy congestion at the mainline toll plazas on the busiest travel days, and be prepared for sudden, intermittent stops, especially near the Leesburg and Canoe Creek mainline toll plazas in Orange and Osceola Counties..

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 and maintenance-related lane closures and restrictions on Florida's Turnpike-operated roads are suspended from 6 a.m. Friday, December 21, to 6 a.m. Wednesday, January 2, 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 Interstate 75 near Wildwood in Sumter County,
- The Seminole Expressway and Southern Connector Extension (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 (Toll 589) in Hillsborough, Pasco and Hernando Counties,
- The Sawgrass Expressway (Toll 869) in Broward County, and
- The Daniel Webster Western Beltway (Toll 429) in Southwest Orange and Northwest Osceola Counties.

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), or visit the website at <http://www.floridasturnpike.com>.

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\*The Hero Award is presented by *American Towman Magazine* and began in 1989. Each year, those involved in the towing and road services industry nominate individuals for the Hero Award. Approximately 10 individuals receive the award each year.

The award is for, "the simple act of heroism." In almost every case, the individual has saved the life of another person by putting his or her own life in danger.