

Florida's 511 Progress Report



***Next Generation—
The sky's the Limit***

Report Year 2006

Next Generation

“Florida’s 511 service is helping us in Florida learn to use our roads smarter. We cannot afford to keep building new and bigger roads to meet the needs caused by our growth. But we can use tools like 511 to manage our daily commutes and be smarter when we drive.”

Rep. Corrine Brown (D-Fla)

“As Florida continues to grow, our need for intelligent transportation solutions grows, too. Florida’s 511 service is a great example of how technology and communication are being used to make travel easier and safer throughout the state. It is an important piece of our state’s transportation system.”

Rep. John Mica (R-Fla)

“Traffic congestion can lead to accidents, which can lead to even more congestion. If drivers can use 511 to plan a better route, everyone wins.”

Florida Highway Patrol Major Ernesto Duarte

Florida 511—Enabled by Legislation

Unlike most other states, where implementation of 511 services is unregulated by state law, on July 14, 2003, Florida’s legislature designated FDOT as the lead agency for implementing 511 and as the state’s point of contact for coordinating 511 services with telecommunications service providers (334.60 F.S.).

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Dear friends and followers of 511,

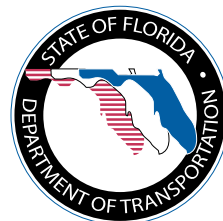
On behalf of FDOT, we are pleased to present this 511 Progress Report highlighting key accomplishments from the past year, as well as plans for taking the state’s traveler information systems to new heights of success.

In 2006 Florida’s 511 services surpassed a total of 17 million calls since inception of the first two regional systems in 2002. Despite the sizeable number of 511 services currently in operation across the nation, Florida’s services continue to account for up to 30 percent of all calls made at certain times of the year. During this past year, we initiated operation of two new regional 511 services for Northeast and Southwest Florida—resulting in five operational services across the state. In addition, we upgraded the Statewide/Central Florida systems via deployment of the MyFlorida 511 service, which provides users with the ability to personalize their 511 experience.

We now offer 511 and other traveler information services to the entire population of Florida. Despite there being high levels of satisfaction with existing services, we are currently seeking to improve the level of service offered to users through the procurement of a next generation 511 service that integrates the state’s existing regional traveler information services into a single comprehensive statewide service.

Studies conducted during mid-2006 indicate that the audience for 511 continues to grow and that users have a generally high level of trust in the quality of information provided. At the same time, there remains significant room for improving overall 511 awareness. As a result, FDOT is working to increase Floridians’ knowledge of 511 via the development of a comprehensive statewide marketing program that includes the establishment of relationships with both the media and other public agencies capable of offering promotional assistance about 511 and related services.

This past year saw Florida’s 511 services attain an exceptional level of success. This has continued during early 2007 with the Southeast Florida 511 service recently surpassing the 10 million caller mark! Although this gives us reason to celebrate, we need to stay focused on working together to continue expanding and improving 511 services across the state. Only by doing so can we assure maintaining the upward velocity necessary to give Florida the lift it needs to stay at the forefront of 511 service provision in the nation.



Elizabeth Birriel

Elizabeth Birriel, P.E.
Deputy State Traffic Operations Engineer
ITS Program Manager
Florida Department of Transportation

Florida's 511 Timeline Development

07/2000

511 designated as the national traveler information number by the FCC

Fall 2008

Next Generation Statewide 511 Service fully operational

06/2002

Central Florida Traveler Information 511 Service launched by District Five

Summer 2008

Transition to Next Generation Statewide 511 Service

07/2002

Southeast Florida SunGuideSM 511 Service launched by District Six

“Thank you for this wonderful service. I travel around the state and use it frequently. It is fantastic. Keep up the good work!”

07/2003

Florida legislation passed, requiring FDOT to be the lead 511 agency

Summer 2007

Statewide/Central Florida 511 Service scheduled for update to utilize SunGuide
Marketing efforts for Next Generation Statewide 511 Service to be initiated

09/2004

Tampa Bay Regional Traveler Information Service launched by District Seven

04/2007

Southwest Florida scheduled to be added to the Statewide 511 Service

Central Florida Traveler
June 2006

12/2006

MyFlorida 511 service launched

10/2006

Northeast Florida 511 Service launched by District Two

11/2005

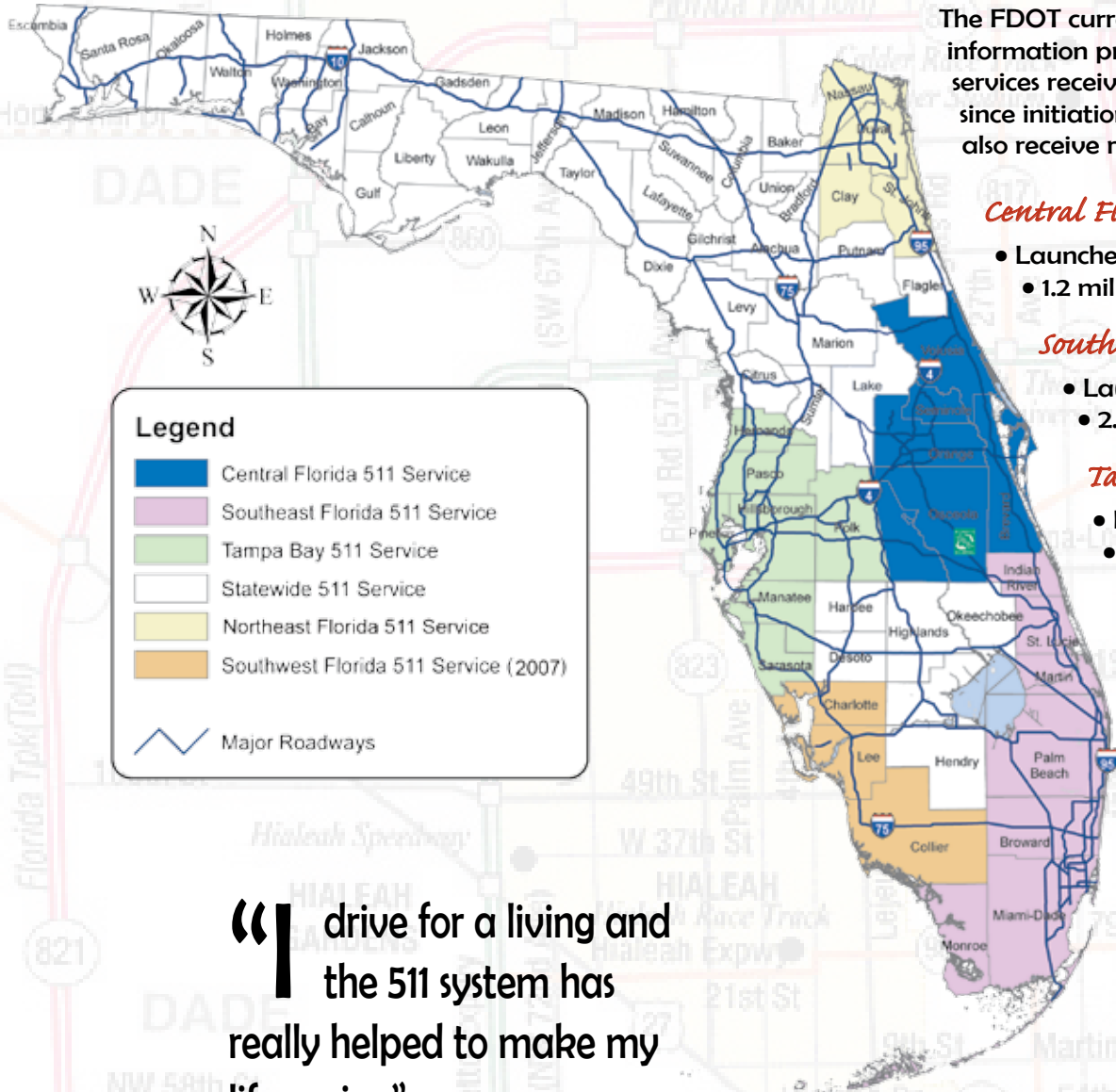
Launch of Statewide 511 Service and expansion of Central Florida Traveler Information 511 Service as part of iFlorida

01/2006

New automated Interactive Voice Response (IVR) service debuted by Southeast Florida 511

Mapping Florida's Current & Future 511 Services

The FDOT currently operates one of the most widely used traveler information programs in the country, with the statewide and regional 511 services receiving roughly 500,000 calls a month and over 17 million calls since initiation in 2002. In addition, Florida's co-branded 511 Web sites also receive roughly 1,000,000 Web hits a month.



Central Florida 511

- Launched in June 2002
- 1.2 million calls in 2006 / Over 6 million calls since inception

Southeast Florida

- Launched in July 2002
- 2.4 million calls in 2006 / 9.5 million calls since inception

Tampa Bay 511

- Launched in September 2004
- Over 500,000 calls in 2006 / Over 1.1 million calls since inception

Statewide Florida 511

- Launched in November 2005
- 400,000 calls in 2006

Northeast Florida 511

- Launched on October 27, 2006

Southwest Florida 511

- Scheduled for launch on April 11, 2007

“I drive for a living and the 511 system has really helped to make my life easier.”

Central Florida Traveler
November 2006

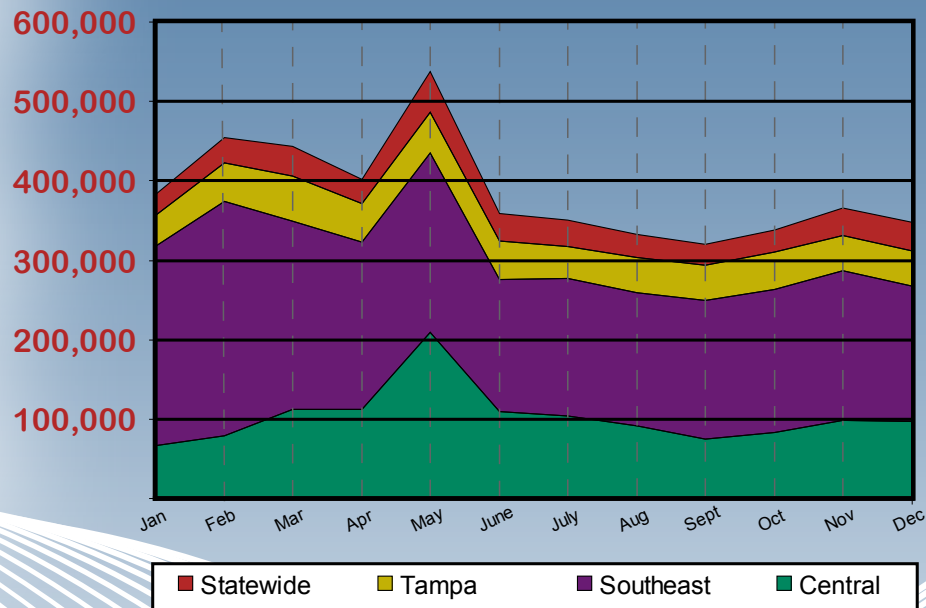
Statistics Say...

Use of Florida's 511 services has grown steadily since inception of the Central and Southeast Florida services in 2002, as illustrated by the Annual Call From Florida's Combined 511 Services graph. Since that time, Florida's 511 services have, on average, accounted for between 20 to 40 percent (depending on the time of year) of the 511 calls from all statewide and regional services in operation nationwide.

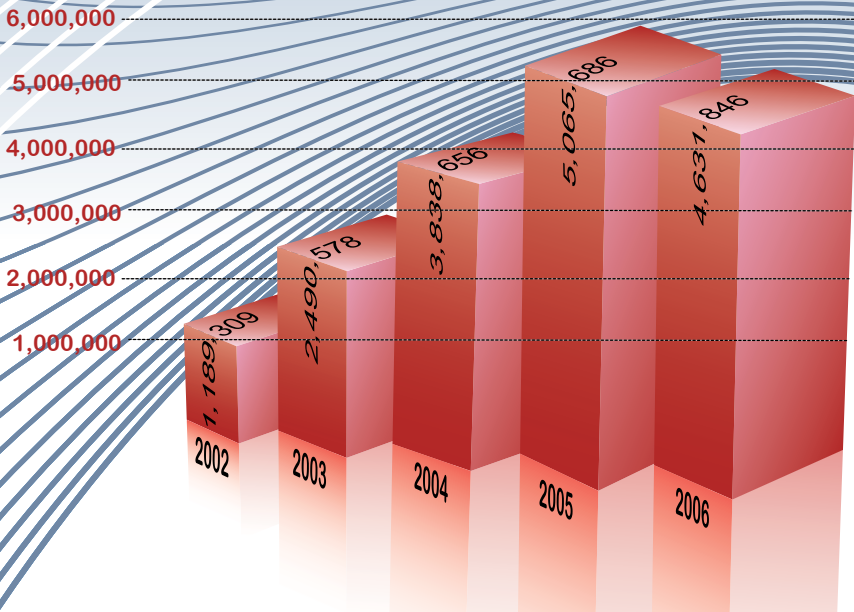
During 2006, call volumes dropped off somewhat from the high experienced in 2005 of over five million, which is thought to be the result of an unusually active storm season. It is believed that this drop in calls stemmed from two primary factors:

1. A lack of severe weather during the summer of 2006, and
2. Switching of the Southeast Florida phone service from touchtone to interactive voice response-based; which resulted in a brief drop in call volumes while users learned how to use the new service.

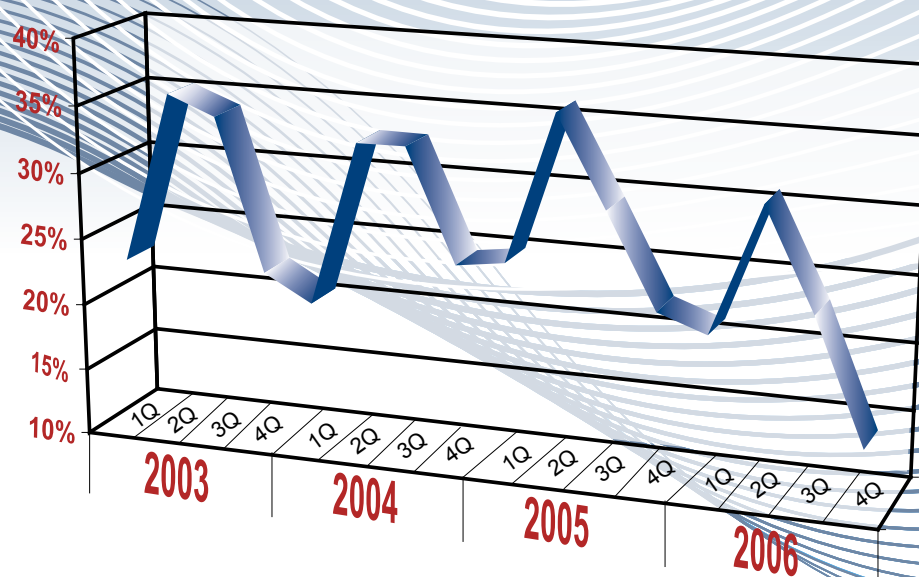
Distribution of Total 2006 Florida 511 Calls by System



Annual Call Volumes From Florida's Combined 511 Services



Percentage of Nationwide 511 Calls Made in Florida



Traveler Information Usage Feedback

Floridians Give Feedback About Traveler Information Usage

During March 2006, Schapiro Research Group (SRG) interviewed 2,800 drivers across Florida to explore usage of, attitudes toward, and perceptions of the FDOT's ITS services. High level findings based on this research included:

- Of users who seek out traffic information from sources other than radio and television, 45 percent seek it out online, while 18 percent use 511.
- Among those who know about 511, about one-third have called it at least once, and 16 percent use it occasionally or more often.
- 31 percent of 511 users reported calling the system to obtain more information about something they saw posted on a dynamic message sign.
- 511 users trust the information enough to alter their routes. Most 511 users (86 percent) indicate they are likely to do so, and over half of them are very likely to alter their route.
- 30 percent of 511 users call ahead of time to plan their trip, versus 64 percent who are more likely to call it after running into traffic problems.

Research indicates that there is still significant room for 511 awareness and usage levels to increase (Over half of 511 users say they use it "seldom" and only 14 percent "frequently.") via a combination of increased marketing and continuous quality improvement of the 511 service.

Ensuring Access to Floridians With Disabilities

FDOT is continuously seeking new opportunities to work with a diverse range of differently-abled communities in order to ensure that 511 is developed so as to serve the needs of the broadest group of Florida's citizens possible. As part of these efforts, FDOT has included requirements language in the procurement documentation for its next generation statewide ATIS service to help ensure Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.



“Tourists and residents alike appreciate that they can better anticipate travel times to their destinations. Just having that information helps reduce the stress of driving.”

**Kevin Bakewell, Senior Vice President,
AAA Auto Club South**

Florida's 511 Services—

Reaching For the Sky

FDOT is continuously pursuing new technologies and operational strategies to improve the level of service provided to customers. Some of the enhancements deployed during 2006 include:

Statewide/Central Florida

- Deployed the MyFlorida 511 service, which allows users to preprogram up to 11 frequently-traveled routes for immediate access to real-time traveler information when they dial 511. 511 users must log onto www.FL511.com to create a custom profile of routes as well as to register up to two telephone numbers from which they typically dial 511. MyFlorida 511 uses Caller ID to recognize the caller and asks whether they want to hear information for their preprogrammed routes. Florida's Statewide 511 Service is the first in the country to use this technology.
- Added a new feature to the 511 service allowing drivers to report incident-related congestion in areas not currently reported by 511. Callers can do this via the voice-activated system by simply saying "feedback." They are then prompted to leave a message indicating the road on which they are traveling—including a cross street or mile marker, their direction of travel, and a description of the incident that's blocking traffic. 511 operators are immediately notified of new messages (received as .wav files via e-mail). After listening to the message, operators verify the incident using traffic cameras or law enforcement resources. Once an incident is verified, it is incorporated into an updated travel conditions report for that roadway.

Northeast Florida

- Launched the Northeast Florida 511 service in late October 2006, covering all limited-access facilities and major U.S. and state roads throughout District Two.

“By helping drivers steer clear of trouble, we're cutting the gridlock that frustrates our lives, wastes time and fuel, and stifles economic opportunity.”

**J. Richard Capka,
FHWA Acting Administrator**

Southeast Florida

- Relocated all 511 operations and offices to the FDOT District Six SunGuideSM Transportation Management Center (TMC) in June 2006. This move has simplified communications between 511 staff, District Six TMC operators, and Florida Highway Patrol Troop E as well as provided 511 operators with easy access to streaming video from more than 100 cameras in FDOT Districts Four and Six.
- Initiated a performance tracking program to assess the timeliness and accuracy of information posted to 511. The next step in this program will be to add a requirement that verifies that out-of-date information is removed from the 511 service in a timely fashion.
- Began development of a program to provide streaming video from regional closed-circuit television cameras on the Southeast Florida 511 Web site.
- Southeast Florida regional partners (FDOT Districts Four and Six, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, and Miami-Dade Expressway Authority) conduct a monthly incident and events review of roadways covered by the 511 service to evaluate the timeliness and accuracy of lane blocking events. Since 2006, accuracy levels have improved from less than 60 percent to nearly 90 percent, benefiting motorists with improved regional, route-specific traveler information.

Tampa Bay Area

- Established a comment line that allows system managers to receive feedback concerning 511 service operations and suggestions for service improvement. Calls made to the comment line are returned upon user request.
- Extended the provision of services in Polk, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties via an expansion of service coverage to include 30 new or lengthened roadways totaling 300 miles.
- Enhanced coordination with regional emergency operations centers to facilitate the improved flow of data in support of future evacuation efforts.

The Next Generation

Florida currently uses a regional approach to providing traveler information, allowing each service to act as a stand-alone service that provides its own data collection, data fusion, and data dissemination services. The nature of this service architecture results in callers to 511 being connected to one of the regional 511 services or the statewide 511 service based on the physical coverage area from which their call originated. While these efforts have proven highly effective, opportunities remain to improve service to the traveling public by integrating the regional traveler information services into a single source for statewide traveler information.

All of the state's existing regional advanced traveler information system (ATIS) projects are scheduled to reach the end of their contractual terms in 2008. This situation provides the FDOT with an opportunity to introduce a new approach to providing traveler information. To this end, on February 28, 2007, FDOT initiated an Invitation to Negotiate- (ITN-) based procurement process aimed at securing the next generation of ATIS services for the state of Florida. This next generation system will eliminate the regional branches of the 511 service so that callers will automatically have the ability to receive traveler information for any part of the state without the need to transfer between co-existing regional 511 services.

The rationale behind this new approach to 511 is to:

- Avoid redundant spending on multiple regional 511 services
- Eliminate inconsistencies in service delivery across the state
- Eliminate call routing issues
- Lower operating and maintenance costs
- Simplify implementation of a statewide video aggregation system
- Enhance FDOT District coordination
- Better meet stakeholder needs

It is anticipated that the service developed, based on the outcome of the ITN, will begin operation during the latter half of 2008 and include five years of operations and maintenance.

Reaching Beyond the Phone

Each of Florida's 511 services, both regional and statewide, has a "co-branded" 511 Web site (meaning that 511 is part of each site's address). This makes the Internet address easier to remember and better identifies it as being affiliated with FDOT's 511 services.

The various sites each offer unique traits and services for their respective regions, including:

- Each site allows users to receive personalized traveler information via e-mail alert
- Central Florida's site provides arterial travel times in the Orlando metropolitan area
- Southeast Florida's site is bilingual (English and Spanish)
- Callers can pre-program frequently traveled routes into the Statewide and Central Florida sites that allow them to access real-time travel information on those routes immediately after calling 511.

Florida's 511 Links

Southeast Florida -----	www.southflorida511.com
Statewide/Central Florida -----	www.FL511.com
Tampa Bay -----	www.511TampaBay.com
Northeast Florida -----	www.Jax511.com
Southwest Florida -----	www.southwestflorida511.com

myFLORIDA
511

Increasing User Awareness

The marketing of 511 and related advanced traveler information services is one of the most important elements in ensuring the ultimate success of these services. As a result, FDOT has sought to raise public awareness and 511 service usage via a comprehensive statewide marketing effort that has included the development of relationships with both the media and other public agencies able to offer promotional assistance.



“Got the number off the Florida Traveler’s Guide that I picked up at a rest stop and I’m very pleased. Thanks for your help.”

South Florida Traveler
2006

Highlights from Around the State

- Relationships have been established with broadcast media outlets around the state to provide television and radio coverage about Florida’s 511 services. This has resulted in free educational outreach worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. In addition, many of the stations involved have included 511 information on their Web sites, including links to www.FL511.com.
- Print media coverage of Florida’s 511 services in 2006 included all major statewide newspapers resulting in several million positive impressions.
- 511 public service announcements featuring Governor Jeb Bush as well as FSU Coach Bobby Bowden, UF Coach Urban Meyer, and UCF Coach George O’Leary have run statewide on major network affiliate stations as well as on sports networks and government television.
- AAA Auto Club South has conducted outreach with its membership to encourage use of Florida’s 511 service, going so far as to state that, “During high-volume travel, it is imperative that travelers stay aware of adverse conditions and delays.” They have also placed “511” stickers on all state map requests made in the Central Florida region.
- Verizon Wireless placed an “informational message” regarding 511 in all January billing statements distributed around the state.
- 511 banners, viewable by 2 million drivers per week, were hung on City of Orlando parking garages twice during the year.
- Orange County Mayor Rich Crotty designated November 17, 2006, as “511 Traveler Information System Day.” This proclamation was made on the official one-year anniversary of the launch of the expanded Central Florida 511 and statewide 511 services.
- A bi-monthly 511 e-newsletter is produced by FDOT with feature updates, call statistics, caller testimonials, and educational outreach updates.
- 511 articles and information have appeared in employer newsletters, including Orlando Regional Healthcare and Gaylord Palms Resort; tourism publications throughout Central Florida; and yellow pages directories published by RH Donnelly (Embarq), BellSouth, and Verizon.
- FDOT’s Office of Motor Carrier Compliance has agreed to place 511 posters on weigh station and truck comfort station bulletin boards throughout the state and has offered display space, where available, for placement of 511 information cards.
- Newsletters distributed to the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority and Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise customers featured articles concerning use of 511.

511 Deployments Nationwide

National Deployment Areas With Access Numbers and Co-branded Web Sites

Alaska	(866) 282-7577	511.alaska.gov
Arizona.....	(888) 411-ROAD	www.az511.com
California		
Sacramento / Northern California.....	(877) 511-TRIP	www.sacregion511.org
San Francisco Bay Area.....	(866) 736-7433	www.511.org
San Diego	(800) 215-4551	www.511sd.com
Colorado.....	(303) 639-1111	
Florida		
Central Florida.....	(866) 510-1930	
Florida Statewide.....	(866) 511-3352	www.fl511.com
Southeast Florida.....	(866) 914-3838	www.511southflorida.com
Tampa Bay.....	(800) 576-3886	www.511tampabay.com
Northeast Florida.....		www.Jax511.com
Southwest Florida		www.SouthwestFlorida511.com
Idaho	(888) 432-7623	511.idaho.gov
Iowa	(800) 288-1047	www.511ia.org
Kansas	(866) 511-KDOT	511.ksdot.org
Kentucky		
Cincinnati / Northern Kentucky.....	(513) 333-3333	
Kentucky Statewide.....	(866) RDREPORT	www.511.ky.gov
Louisiana	(888) ROAD511	www.511LA.org
Maine.....	(866) 282-7578	www.511maine.gov
Minnesota.....	(800) 542-0220	www.511mn.org
Montana.....	(800) 226-7623	www.mdt511.com
Nebraska.....	(800) 906-9069	www.511nebraska.org
Nevada.....	(877) NVROADS	
New Hampshire	(866) 282-7579	www.nh.gov/dot/511
North Carolina.....	(877) 511-INNC	www.ncsmartlink.org/511/default.html
North Dakota	(866) MY ND 511	http://www.dot.nd.gov/divisions/maintenance/511_nd.html
Oregon	(503) 588-2941	
Rhode Island.....	(888) 401-4511	
South Dakota	(866) MY SD 511	www.sddot.com/511.asp
Tennessee.....	(877) 244-0065	www.tn511.com
Utah.....	(866) 511-UTAH	
Vermont.....	(800) ICY-ROAD	www.511vt.org
Virginia	(800) 578-4111	www.511virginia.org
Washington State	(800) 695-ROAD	www.wsdot.wa.gov/traffic/511
Wyoming.....	(888) 996-7623	

 Operational

National 511 Vision Statement

511 will be a customer-driven, multi-modal travel information service available across the United States, accessed via telephones, and other personal communications devices, realized through locally deployed interoperable systems, enabling a safer, more reliable and efficient transportation system.

Florida 511 Contact Information

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ITS Program
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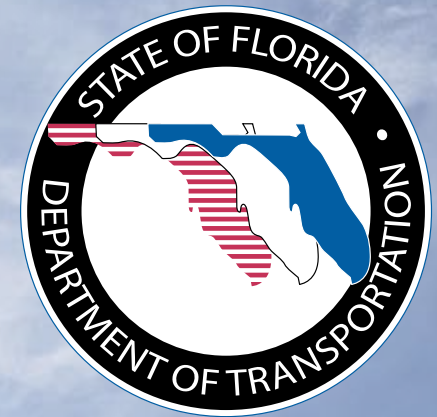
Statewide/Central Florida: (866) 510-1930 / www.FL511.com
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(386) 943-5309
Rick.Morrow@dot.state.fl.us

Southeast Florida: (866) 914-3838 / www.southflorida511.com
Rory Santana, FDOT District Six
(305) 470-6934
Rory.Santana@dot.state.fl.us

Tampa Area: (800) 576-3886 / www.511TampaBay.com
Bill Wilshire, FDOT District Seven
(813) 975-6612
Bill.Wilshire@dot.state.fl.us

Northeast Florida: www.Jax511.com
Peter Vega, FDOT District Two
(904) 360-5463
Peter.Vega@dot.state.fl.us

Southwest Florida: www.Southwestflorida511.com
Don Olson, FDOT District One
(863) 519-2274
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