



95 EXPRESS



News Clip

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DOT: Ignore toll signs on I-95 during tests this week

BY LARRY LEBOWITZ

State transportation managers will be testing the new electronic tolling signs on Interstate 95 in Miami-Dade starting at 9 p.m. Tuesday.

Drivers should be prepared to encounter lane closures in the northbound express area and to ignore the posted prices. The road, for now, remains free.

"It might be confusing to some people, but we're just testing the equipment," said Florida Department of Transportation spokesman Brian Rick. "There's no need to panic."

The testing is slated to run from 9 p.m. Tuesday to 5 a.m. Wednesday and during the same hours starting Wednesday night. The schedule could change due to inclement weather.

The DOT and its contractors are testing the SunPass electronic tolling equipment and communications devices.

The DOT hasn't firmly committed to a kick-off date for actual tolls, but based on the latest tests, is aiming for early November.

SunPass only tolls will vary based on congestion, meaning that higher prices will be charged during peak periods when more vehicles are using the express lanes and lower during off-peak periods.

The rate will be clearly displayed on electronic message signs before drivers need to make a decision whether to use the two tolled express lanes or the four free general purpose lanes.

The DOT says tolls are expected to range between 25 cents and \$2.65 under average traffic conditions.

But in unusual circumstances or very extreme conditions, tolls could be as high as \$6.20 to provide operating speeds between 45 and 50 mph in the express lanes.

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