



95 EXPRESS



News Clip

From: *Local 10*, Tuesday, December 9, 2008
Subject: **Officials Say I-95 Express Lanes A Success**

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FHP Officer Says Only One Crash In Express Lanes Since Tolls Began

MIAMI -- In its first five days, Interstate 95 Express has been a resounding -- and somewhat surprising -- success, according to the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Highway Patrol.

"It's going better than everyone expected," said FHP Lt. Pat Santangelo, who supervises troopers on the 7-mile stretch of Interstate 95 between the area just north State Road 112 and the Golden Glades interchange.

Tolling began on the two express lanes last Friday at 6 a.m. According to FDOT, 2,100 cars per hour have used the express lanes at peak times, a slightly higher number than anticipated. Nevertheless, the rollout of I-95 Express has been almost glitch-free -- and also, accident free, Local 10's Michael Putney reported.

"Ordinarily we have six accidents a day on the stretch of highway," Santangelo said. "But since the tolls began, we only have had one and that was on Saturday morning. It was cleared in about 10 minutes."

The FDOT district secretary, Gus Pego, is elated at the early success.

"I'm very encouraged," Pego said. "It gives South Florida drivers a real alternative if they're willing to pay their way out of congestion."

Drivers can be charged between 25 cents and \$6.20, depending on how heavy the traffic is. Thus far, Pego said, drivers have not had to pay too much. The highest toll charged was \$1.75.