



Alachua County, FL



# TIM NEWSLETTER

September/October 2011 Edition

Volume 2



EMERGENCY  
AHEAD





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## Team Update

The first edition of our Alachua Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Newsletter for July/August 2011 appears to have been a big success based on all of the positive messages and comments we have received. Having this newsletter provides a medium to share the accomplishments of our Alachua TIM Team. Therefore, based on this positive feedback, we are moving forward with the publication of the bi-monthly newsletter.

Our Alachua TIM Team met on August 10<sup>th</sup> at the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Gainesville Operations Center. After agency updates and a debriefing of incidents, the team completed the 2011 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Traffic Incident Management Program Self-Assessment. With discussion from all agencies, scores were applied and sent to our FHWA representative. The over-all score for our Team was 84 percent and there were several areas that we could not score such as our Road Ranger Service Patrol.

We can be proud of the areas we scored high in, since they are consistent with our team’s mission statement and prove we use partnering efforts to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times in order to deter congestion and improve safety. All of this is possible because of our work as a true Team.

In an effort to keep our minds focused on our Team’s overall goal of reducing incident scene clearance times, all of our team members were invited to attend a refresher course on National

Incident Management System (NIMS) 100 and National Unified Goal (NUG). Chief Marty Senterfitt with the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department conducted training titled “Incident Command System Overview for Executives” on September 20<sup>th</sup> at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center located in Jacksonville. The program was excellent and Chief Senterfitt shared extremely valuable information.

Another great event we can all look forward to is the 18<sup>th</sup> Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) World Congress that will be held October 16<sup>th</sup>– 20<sup>th</sup> in Orlando. The Interstate 95 (I-95) Coalition is also sponsoring the “Incident and Emergency Responder Day” on October 18. More information about this event can be found at <http://www.itsworldcongress.org/>.

Again, I want to thank all our members for the continued support that makes our Alachua TIM Team such a success. Remember, we take our **mission** and **vision** extremely seriously!

### Mission

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The Florida Department of Transportation District Two’s Traffic Incident Management Teams through partnering efforts strive to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to deter congestion and improve safety. The Teams’ objective is to exceed the ‘Open Roads Policy’ thus ensuring mobility, economic prosperity and quality of life.

### Vision

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Through cooperation, communication and training the teams intend to reduce incident





scene clearance times by 10 percent each year through 2015.

**Donna Danson - FDOT District Two  
Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team  
Project Manager**

## **Emergency Management Update**

At the time of this writing, we are nearing the peak of the 2011 Hurricane Season. We have already had 14 named storms and there are several depressions in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico that could develop into tropical storms.

Hurricane Irene may end up being the costliest storm in history. There were 18 deaths stretching from Puerto Rico through New England that were blamed on Irene.

The final dollar amount has not been released yet, but early estimates are around \$3 billion dollars. The initial estimate was at \$14 billion, but that was high and was made before the exact storm track was known.

President Obama declared a state of emergency for 11 states with Puerto Rico being declared a major disaster area. It has been estimated that as many as four million customers were without electricity at some time during Irene's journey. We were very fortunate that Irene took a northerly turn.

We missed another hurricane impact when Hurricane Katia turned north and remained in the Atlantic. Katia fluctuated up and down between a tropical storm and a category three hurricane. Had Hurricane Katia remained on a westerly course, it would have had a major impact on Florida's coastlines and cities.

We have been very blessed by low pressure systems and strong upper level wind shears that have caused the storms to move away from Florida; but that doesn't mean this pattern will continue.

Now is no time to let down your hurricane guard or get complacent with regards to storm preparation. Just because we have been fortunate and the storms have tracked to other states does not mean the next one will do the same. Please continue to be diligent in remaining storm-ready at work and at home. If you don't already have a personal preparedness plan, it's not too late to develop one. You can develop your plan quickly and easily from this link: <http://www.floridadisaster.org/family/>. Log on, register, create a user ID and password and you will be guided to create your own personal/family preparedness plan.

On the Homeland Security front, most of the talk has been around two issues: the tenth anniversary of September 11th and budget cuts. There was an increased awareness of possible terrorist attacks on the anniversary of the attacks. However, there were no known targets in Florida and only speculation that terrorists may have used the anniversary to attack again. As September 11<sup>th</sup> came and went, there were no attacks, but there were several arrests around the U.S. of suspected terrorists, thus foiling their plots. This shows the great strides that we have made concerning homeland security over the past ten years. However, it seems the further away from September 11, 2001 we get, the less and less funding that is set aside for protection.



Some of the funding cuts are justified and some are just the product of the poor economy.

I am sure Florida will continue moving forward in its approach to security with the Regional Domestic Security Task Forces and the Joint Terrorism Task Forces. Until next time, stay safe and be prepared.

**Ed Ward, CEM FPEM  
FDOT District Two  
Emergency Coordination Officer**

### **City of Gainesville TMC Update**

*The Traffic Management Center (TMC) was created as a jointly funded project by the City of Gainesville; Alachua County; University of Florida; and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The TMC is operated by the City of Gainesville.*

Currently, the Traffic Management Center (TMC) is working with the Gainesville Police Department, Alachua County Sheriff's Office, University of Florida Police Department and the Florida Highway Patrol on University of Florida football traffic control. During the pre-game part of the day, the TMC assists with traffic flow into the stadium along the major routes leading from Interstate 75 (I-75), Waldo Road and US 441. Particular interest is focused on the off-ramps at Williston Road, Archer Road and Newberry Road. This effort is to ensure that the traffic on the off-ramps does not back up on to the main line of I-75.

To that end, the TMC Staff has been working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on a project that will ultimately assist law enforcement in addressing incidents on or

near the interstate. As part of the Traffic Management System project, outdated traffic signal equipment has been replaced throughout Alachua County and, per FDOT procedures, is in the process of being surplus. The idea is to place an empty signal controller cabinet on each side of the interstate at the urban areas. A cache of traffic cones will be stored in each cabinet and will be immediately available to law enforcement officers. They can then use these cones until the FDOT, City or County Public Works is able to respond with a full contingent of maintenance of traffic equipment.

This idea was proposed by a Lieutenant with the Gainesville Police Department (GPD). One immediate use of these cones will be for game-day traffic. On game days, GPD uses cones and their patrol cars to close the eastbound outside travel lane on Archer Road and Newberry Road as they approach the I-75 northbound off-ramps. They then direct traffic on the off-ramps to free flow into the outside travel lane, which keeps traffic from backing up onto the interstate.

If you have questions, please call the Traffic Management Center at 352-393-7960, Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 6 PM or visit us at [www.gac-smartraffic.com](http://www.gac-smartraffic.com), or on Twitter at @gacsmartraffic or you can 'like' us at Gainesville / Alachua County Smartraffic on Facebook.

**Phil Mann  
Traffic Operations Manager  
City of Gainesville**





## FDOT Maintenance Update

When you attend the Alachua Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team meetings, Bruce Strickland, some of the on-call personnel and I are the people you probably think of and the faces you associate with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Gainesville Operations.

However, there is a lot more to Gainesville Operations than just us. The most visible component and the one that is most likely to directly impact you is the construction component of our team. Led by Lori Williams, this 21-person team is responsible for administering and inspecting all FDOT construction contracts on the state highway system for six counties.

These projects range in scope from extreme size to small and include landscaping, installing traffic signals, adding bike lanes, widening shoulders, adding turn lanes, resurfacing and improving safety and road capacity.

Some examples are the Archer and Newberry Road off-ramp improvement projects and the new construction of the State Road 26 overpass over US 301 and the adjacent railroad crossing; and we can't forget the recently completed reconstruction of Main Street downtown.

On a much smaller scale, but another important component is the Maintenance Permits Office. This group permits and inspects private construction on our right of way.

Some examples of this include driveway access for new businesses or homes and installing new or repairing existing utilities by the utility companies. The bottom line is even with the slower economy, there is still a lot happening on and to our state roads, as well as on our right of way.

The point of introducing these components of the Operations Group is that while work on or near our roadways may be under the direction of one of several areas, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call 352-381-4300. We will get you in touch with the proper person to answer your question or address your concern.

**Steve Scanlan**  
**FDOT District Two**  
**Gainesville Operations Maintenance**  
**Engineer**

## Law Enforcement Update

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, **a drunk-driving crash claims a life every 23 minutes between midnight and 3 a.m.**

Based on these statistics, Alachua County law enforcement wanted to establish a zero-tolerance approach to the start of a new semester at the University of Florida and Santa Fe College, as well as the start of a traditionally celebrated college football season.

So, officers with the Gainesville Police Department, the Florida Highway Patrol, the Alachua County Sheriff's Office, the Alachua Police Department and the University of Florida Police Department planned and executed a





DUI checkpoint Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> in Gainesville.

During the duration of the checkpoint, 837 vehicles were stopped and four drivers were arrested and charged with DUI. Officers also arrested one person on a warrant and issued 111 citations.

This checkpoint was scheduled in conjunction with the **“Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over”** national enforcement wave.

Beginning Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 8 p.m. and wrapping up at 4 a.m. the following morning, officers from the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office, the Gainesville Police Department, the Florida Highway Patrol, the Alachua Police Department and the High Springs Police Department conducted a DUI saturation detail.

As a result, eight drivers were stopped and arrested on DUI charges, one misdemeanor arrest was made and 142 traffic citations were issued.

Alachua County law enforcement agencies want to eliminate drunk driving and will continue enforcement efforts during the year. Please remember, if you see an impaired driver, call 911 and give an accurate description of the vehicle and its direction of travel.

**Sgt. Joe Raulerson**  
**Gainesville Police Department**

## Construction Update

Crews working on the construction project to add additional lanes at the northbound Interstate 75 exit ramp onto Newberry Road (State Road 26, Exit 387) continue to make good progress.

This project includes the addition of two turn lanes which requires significant work on the east side of the exit ramp. The construction of a retaining wall is nearing completion and crews have started placing drainage pipes. Once this work is complete, the focus will shift to constructing the pavement that will become the additional lanes.

In addition to the new turn lanes on the northbound exit ramp, three existing ramps will also be resurfaced. That work will be performed at night as it will require each ramp to be closed for a few hours while the top layer of asphalt is removed and replaced.

Days before the first home University of Florida football game, a portion of the northbound, outside shoulder was re-opened just south of the exit ramp. This significantly helped the flow of traffic by providing a storage lane for vehicles to wait their turn to exit the interstate.

The re-opening of the outside shoulder along with the reduced speed limit in the construction zone and the temporary removal of the left-lane truck ban seems to have helped ease or relax traffic congestion and backups on a daily basis.

D.A.B. Constructors, Inc., of Inglis, is the prime Contractor for the FDOT and has until next summer to complete the \$2.2 million project.





Sandy Chitwood is the project manager, and is assisted by inspectors Jeremy Baker and Clay Allen.



**Laurie Windham, Atkins  
Public Information**

management, traffic signals, traffic signs & marking, parking operations and parking enforcement.

I am the Public Works Department's Emergency Management Incident Commander (ICS) and also address Homeland Security issues as related to public works.

***Describe your early career or offer a brief job history.***

I have been with the City of Gainesville since 1987 and have been progressing with increasing levels of responsibilities since then. I am in my fourth different position with the City including Traffic Engineer I, Traffic Engineer II and Supervising Engineer. Early on, I was responsible for traffic signals and was hired to build the original computerized traffic signal system.

***Please share any funny job-related stories.***

Early on in my career, we were working on a resurfacing project on SE Third Street in downtown Gainesville. The paving contractor had already placed the tack across the entire street and we had all of the side streets closed off with barricades.

I watched a lady drive up on the other side of the street, get out of her car, move the barricades, drive across the street to where we were, get out of her car to move the barricades and realized that she had sprayed tack all over the side of her car. She looked up, saw us standing there and asked the police officer where she filed a claim to get her car fixed. He kindly explained to her that if she would take

**TIM Team Spotlight**

***Name, job title and work location?***



Philip R. Mann, P.E.,  
Traffic Operations  
Manager - Traffic  
Management Center  
located at 405 NW 39<sup>th</sup>  
Avenue

***Describe your job and how long you've been in your current position.***

I was promoted to the Traffic Operations Manager position in the Public Works Department in 2007. In this position, I am responsible for five sections: traffic





care of her car, he wouldn't issue her a citation for violation of a traffic control device.

***Describe an "AHA" moment in your career or personal life.***

I have been involved in emergency management since the early 1990's and have received extensive training as it relates to public works. The moment that everything really hit home to me was September 11, 2001.

It was then that I realized the importance of public works employees being trained in emergency management and homeland security. The reason is that after the initial search for survivors of the World Trade Center collapse and the Pentagon attack, the activities became clean-up operations and those were handled by public works employees.

It became ever so clear to me that we need to be able to work in cooperation with police and fire agencies and understand that we are working on a crime scene. We must be vigilant to not disturb or destroy evidence, but to point it out to the proper authority. We must also be prepared to work in less than ideal environments such as with biohazards or chemical spills.

We are used to police and fire agencies being first responders and placed in harm's way, but it was on September 11, 2001 that I realized that in the current global environment, we need to be prepared to assist in such an endeavor. This will also allow the police and fire to properly and efficiently do their jobs while we do ours.

***What was your best and worst job ever?***

My worst job ever is easy – delivering newspapers as a kid. We had to deliver the papers every day, regardless of the weather – pouring rain, blizzard, so cold your eyes watered and then froze.

Best job ever is also easy – my current job. I have a great director and we have a great technically qualified staff. Each section does a great job and the employees take ownership in our programs.

***Describe any special accomplishments at work.***

- In 2009, the Institute of Transportation Engineers – District 10 awarded the Sherwood L. "Woody" Hiller Distinguished Service Award to me. It is given in recognition of outstanding contributions to the transportation profession.
- I have been appointed to SAFECOM by the American Public Works Association. It is a Department of Homeland Security multi-disciplinary committee working to improve first responder communications to avoid the inter-agency communications issues that occurred in the World Trade Center tragedy on September 11, 2001.
- Planning, developing and securing funding for the \$ 18.4 million Traffic Management System that includes the state of the art Traffic Management Center.
- I am the co-author of the paper: "Public Works and Terrorism Response: Black Sunday". It was published by the American Public Works Association and selected by





the Department of Homeland Security as a “Best Practice” for first responders.

***Where were you born/grew up?***

I was born in Fort Eustis, Virginia and grew up in Alleghany County, which is in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. I spent my summers on my grandparents’ cattle farm in West Virginia.

***Tell us about your family.***

I am divorced and have 3 children who live with me. My oldest son is in his third year of college and I have twins (boy and girl) who just turned 16. My parents are retired and live in Virginia. My Dad lives on a lake that is just 20 miles from the epicenter of the earthquake that recently struck Virginia. My Mother lives on the Cowpasture River in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

***What are your hobbies?***

I love sports. I particularly enjoy college football, baseball and softball. I am responsible for traffic control at Gator football games and have attended Gator regional and super regional tournaments for both the baseball and softball teams the last several years.

***What is your favorite vacation spot?***

Quite honestly, I like the peace and serenity of my mother’s summer home on the Cowpasture River. There, we can tube on the river, explore the mountains, cook-out or just sit and watch the river flow by.

***What’s the best advice you’ve ever received and who was it from?***

My mother always told me to be honest, sincere, keep my promises and stand by my word.

***What is your favorite or most inspiring quote, and who said it?***

I have two quotations that I love:

- “If you don’t have time to do it right the first time, do you really have time to do it over?” – John Wooden
- “If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail” – Harvey Mackey

**Upcoming Events**

**Next TIM Team Meeting:  
October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011 @ 10:00am**

If you have any upcoming events you would like highlighted in the next newsletter (September 2011), please contact:

- Laurie Windham** - [laurie.windham@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:laurie.windham@dot.state.fl.us)
- Donna Danson**- [donna.danson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:donna.danson@dot.state.fl.us)
- Craig Carnes** - [ccarnes@metriceng.com](mailto:ccarnes@metriceng.com)

