

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: November 12, 2010

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Councilwoman Davis helps make streets safer for blind walkers



Councilwoman Judy L. Davis is continuing her advocacy on behalf of legally blind residents by making devices available that can help make walking City streets safer.

The devices, called “audible pedestrian signals,” can be mounted at intersections to help direct legally blind persons as to when it’s most safe to cross the street.

The signals are provided through the Palm Beach County Traffic Division and installation must be requested by a blind person. According to the department, that request must include a letter from a doctor or institution verifying the requester is legally blind, along with a description of where the device should be placed and why.

Training for use is provided through the state Division of Blind Services.

The device works the same as a regular pedestrian signal. After the button is pressed, the device produces a sound at the beginning of the pedestrian walk signal phase; a different sound is produced when the walk phase is about to end.

“Blind people have really good directional hearing and this device uses that heightened skill,” said Motasem “Mo” Al-Turk, assistant director of the County’s traffic division.

Councilwoman Davis said this is just one more way to serve City residents. The Councilwoman, along with Mayor Thomas A. Masters, proclaimed Oct. 11-15 “White Cane Awareness Week” in the City, during which she hosted a dozen blind service agencies and blind and visually impaired City residents for a series of events.

She is also working with the Municipal Library to ensure there is accessibility equipment such as screen readers available for use by the blind and visually impaired.

“It is my duty to make sure all of our residents have the ability and mobility to access and utilize City services,” Councilwoman Davis said, “and that includes our blind and visually impaired residents.”

For information on obtaining an audible pedestrian signal, call the Office of Councilwoman Davis at 845-4032 or the Palm Beach County Traffic Division at 561-684-4030.

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