

Smart signs are on the way to Keys roads

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office has used money seized in a federal drug case to buy four programmable road signs for use along the Keys.

The signs are similar to those used by the Department of Transportation to warn of road work on state highways. The solar-powered signs can also record an approaching vehicle's speed and automatically switch from the programmed message to a warning that a car is going too fast.

The signs will be used for traffic alerts, special events and traffic safety tips, said Deputy Becky Herrin, spokeswoman for the sheriff's office.

They will be available to community groups, particularly for charitable or nonprofit events, Herrin said.

Each sign cost about \$23,000. They were paid for out of the \$25 million the sheriff's office received from property and cash seizures during federal drug investigations on which Sheriff's Office investigators worked.

Anyone wishing to use a programmable sign should call the local district office of the Sheriff's Office and speak with the zone commander. In the Upper Keys, the number is 305-853-3211. In the Middle Keys, call 305-289-2430. In the Lower Keys, call 305-745-3184.