

Nov. 13, 2007

Sarasota County urges residents to “Change a Light” to reduce energy use

Sarasota County is asking residents to join the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE) and National Association of Counties (NACo) annual ENERGY STAR® “Change a Light, Change the World” campaign to reduce America’s energy consumption.

Sarasota County is participating in the national challenge to collect the greatest number of pledges from residents committing to change one light in their home to one that’s earned the ENERGY STAR® label for energy efficiency. Through Nov. 30, 2007, when residents pledge online at www.scgov.net, they will receive a thank-you email that includes a \$3 discount coupon from Office Depot towards the purchase of a new ENERGY STAR light bulb.

According to USDOE, lighting accounts for about 20 percent of the typical home’s electricity use. Switching to energy-efficient options is a significant way to reduce greenhouse gases, save energy and protect the environment for future generations. ENERGY STAR’s compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL) meet strict energy-efficiency ratings that could save more than \$30 a year in energy costs over the life of the bulb. By some estimates, changing just one incandescent light bulb to an ENERGY STAR-labeled CFL in every home in Florida could save enough energy to light every home in Tallahassee for more than 2.5 years. It would prevent more than 555 million pounds of greenhouse gases, an impact similar to removing 48,000 cars from Florida’s roads.

“Sarasota County is committed to promoting energy efficiency and the ENERGY STAR Change a Light, Change the World campaign is a great way to get our community thinking about ways to reduce energy, help the environment, and save money at the same time,” says Sustainable Sarasota Education Specialist Nina Powers. “When we think of ways to save energy in our homes, changing light bulbs is one of the easiest and most cost effective home improvements we can do, and a remarkably inexpensive way to individually impact America’s energy usage.”

For more information about energy efficient products for home and office, visit the ENERGY STAR Web site at www.energystar.gov, or contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for Sustainable Sarasota.