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County celebrates Pollution Prevention Week Sept. 15-21

Sarasota County is hosting a variety of activities Sept. 15-21 to showcase Pollution Prevention Week, an annual celebration of programs and activities that encourage the prevention and elimination of waste production at its sources. It includes environmentally sound reuse or recycling initiatives that sustain the environment and stimulate the local economy. This year, Sarasota County will focus on volunteer community cleanups and protecting the area's watersheds.

"Pollution Prevention Week is a perfect opportunity to raise awareness and educate our community about the different ways that waste can impact the environment," said Environmental Specialist David Pouso. "It's also useful in encouraging pollution prevention year-round, not just during September."

One way to do that, says Pouso, is by demonstrating to community youth what part they play in maintaining a healthy environment. From 1-3 pm, Saturday, Sept. 20, volunteers from the Suncoast Sports Club will mark storm drains in the Grove Point subdivision of Sarasota. Sarasota County's Storm Drain Marking Program raises awareness that storm drains are the main arteries to local waterways.

Other activities during Pollution Prevention include:

- Displays throughout the month of September at all area libraries.
- Saturday, Sept. 20 – Laurel Park community cleanup.
- 8 a.m. - noon, Saturday, Sept. 20 – International Coastal Cleanup at locations throughout Sarasota County.
- 5:30-7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 24 – presentation by Sarasota County's Neighborhood Environmental Stewardship Team (NEST) at Frances T. Bourne Jacaranda Public Library, 4143 Woodmere Park Blvd., Venice. The NEST program helps citizens understand and improve local environmental conditions in their surrounding watershed. Some of their activities in improving water quality include marking storm drains, limiting fertilizer use and restoring native vegetation in and around stormwater ponds.

For information on how to get involved in activities for Pollution Prevention Week, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000.