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## County recognized for energy conservation measures in buildings

Sarasota County has earned a Quick Start Award in recognition of its commitment to energy conservation and efficiency in its office buildings. The award was given by the Southeast Rebuild Collaborative (SRC), a joint effort of the state energy offices of Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina.

To be eligible for the award, local governments and school districts must demonstrate their commitment to saving energy and reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Sarasota County qualified for the award by taking the ENERGY STAR Challenge, implementing energy-efficient purchasing of environmentally preferable products and joining the SRC energy efficiency program.

“The reduction and efficient use of energy is a major contributor to Sarasota County being recognized as a leader in sustainability efforts,” said county Energy Coordinator Gary Patton.

The county became a partner in the Environmental Protection Agency’s ENERGY STAR program in 2004 after receiving the ENERGY STAR designation for the Sarasota County Judicial Center, which was in the top 20 percent of energy-efficient buildings in the United States. This spring, the county took the ENERGY STAR Challenge, which calls for at least a 10 percent reduction in energy usage for the more than 5 million commercial and industrial buildings in the United States. Sarasota County also has accepted the 2030 Challenge, requiring the design for all new construction and building renovations to reduce fossil fuel emissions to one-half that of conventional construction.

In its application, the county also cited its efforts in developing an energy management plan, and its commitment to build and renovate all county buildings to a green building standard. Two county buildings -- the Twin Lakes Office Complex and the North Sarasota Public Library – are certified under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building program sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council. The county also promotes energy efficiency in operation of county buildings through such measures as automation control systems for air conditioning and lighting, and use of solar technologies, reuse water, low-flow water fixtures, waterless urinals, water-saving and auto flush toilets, cisterns, micro-irrigation and environmental landscape management.

For more information on the county’s energy conservation efforts, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 or visit the county’s Web site, [www.scgov.net/Sustainability/](http://www.scgov.net/Sustainability/).

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