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Sustainable Communities Workshop is scheduled Nov. 3

Sarasota County will hold its fourth annual Sustainable Communities Workshop from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 3. The workshop will be held again at the Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida Event and Conference Center, 4780 Cattlemen Road, Sarasota. Registration is open to the public.

This year's theme for the popular, interactive workshop is the energy-water connection. These two critical natural resources are closely linked since the production of energy requires large volumes of water, while the treatment and distribution of water is equally dependent on readily available, low-cost energy. Leaders from industry, government, and university programs will share local, regional and national directions in research, policies, technology improvement and resource management strategies that help to make to the "Drops to Watts" connection.

The conversation about the energy-water connection began after the 2007 U.S. Department of Energy report to the U.S. Congress. That report brought attention to the fact that managing energy resources requires understanding water issues, while managing water resources requires understanding energy issues. This year's Sustainable Communities Workshop will be looking at topics in both areas and provide citizens with information that is relevant to this region, as well as ideas and solutions they can use to save water and energy. The topics will be of interest to professionals such as planners, builders, developers, engineers, architects and landscape architects, small-business owner and government representatives, as well as interested citizens, homeowners, neighborhood association representatives and community advocates.

"The electricity industry is second only to agriculture as the largest user of water in the United States," said Nina Powers, the county's sustainability outreach coordinator. "Many citizens may not be aware that water is necessary to turn on the lights and run appliances in addition to taking showers and watering lawns. At the workshop, we will discuss the energy and water interdependencies, as well as opportunities to reduce our water supply demand with conservation measures, stormwater management and alternative sources."

Workshop speakers will address several aspects of the energy-water connection throughout the day, and answer questions. Attendees will learn about choices they can make to benefit their homes, neighborhoods, businesses and community, such as low-

impact development, “green” infrastructure, residential water conservation and rainwater harvesting.

“We’re proud that Sarasota County is a recognized leader in sustainability in the state and the country, and our citizens are interested in how they can participate and contribute,” Powers said. “Working with our community partners, our annual Sustainable Communities Workshop is an important part of our sustainability mission to provide citizens with relevant and useful information that can help make a difference today and for future generations.”

The cost of the workshop is \$30 and covers a continental breakfast, lunch and an afternoon refreshment break. Sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are available. Preregistration is required. To register or learn more about the event, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000, or visit www.scgov.net/SustainableCommunities.

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