

The Neighborhood News

What is sustainability? Why is it important to you?

It's simple. Sustainability means responsible use of our natural resources and proper disposal of waste. Think of the generations to come. Will they have the same access to resources we have? Sustainability is ensuring a future for those who come after us. How can we as individuals and as a community work toward this noble goal?

What Can I Do?

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- Use Less Water
- Help Clean Up a Beach
- Change a Light to a Compact Fluorescent Bulb or L.E. D.
- Patronize Green Businesses
- Properly Dispose of Hazardous Waste
- Donate Used Items
- Start a NEST program in your neighborhood
- Use Less Plastic Bags
- Bike, Carpool, or Use SCAT
- Educate yourself about the proper use of fertilizers

Get the whole family involved. There are plenty of resources available that provide fun and educational opportunities for everyone. Check out www.scgov.net/sustainability for the interesting links to educational resources for kids, parents, students and teachers. The variety of information available is surprising; everything from educational games, ecology camps for youth, to the National Energy Foundation's Energy Internet Scavenger Hunt. If you prefer reading books to find out how you can participate the Sarasota County Library system has great green ideas and many books on sustainability. Check out www.sclibs.net.

What Can Business Do?

Balance is the Key

Use the stewardship approach and become a Green Business Partner. Sarasota County was awarded a grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to initiate a Green Business Partnership. The program includes nearly 20 local members. In 2007, the program was expanded to include contractors even those outside of Sarasota County. There are many benefits that can positively impact the health of your employees and the environment as well as your bottom line. Check out www.scgov.net/greenbusiness/benefits

What Your County Does.

According to the Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan 2006, our county is committed to leading by example, promoting public participation, and working in community partnerships to improve our quality of life and the natural systems that support life. This commitment is validated by the ordinances and resolutions our Board of County Commissioners support. The county is proactive and progressive in protecting our quality of life:

1. Sustainability Ordinance #02-119
2. Fertilizer Ordinance #07-062
3. Canopy Road Ordinance #01-041

To view the many ways your county works for you,
www.scgov.net/sustainability/county

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Drought Conditions Worsen!

Sarasota County Utilities Manager Tony Gipe reports that the water emergency is a problem for the entire region and we need cooperation and participation to create real solutions. Citizens can review the current watering restrictions or report water violations by dialing 861-5000 or 861-6790 and immediately press 3. On ways to conserve water, visit www.watermatters.org.

Neighborhood Services Training & Education 2008 Schedule

Grant Orientation Workshops

Venice

March 4 1- 3 p.m.
May 6 1- 3 p.m.
June 7 10 a.m.- Noon

Sarasota

March 12 10 a.m.- Noon
April 2 1- 3 p.m.
May 21 1- 3 p.m.
June 25 1:30- 3:30 p.m.

North Port

April 15 1- 3 p.m.

Reservations are required.

**Contact: Vickie French at
861-5145 or e-mail
vfrench@scgov.net**

Grant applications will be accepted on or before February 19, 2008. Please contact our office prior to submittal and refer to scgov.net for the most current application information.

Leadership Opportunities

The Neighborhood Services Grant Program is building neighborhood leadership opportunities by expanding educational classes. Linda Greaves, Manager of Community Involvement, has joined the Neighborhood Services Team and will be providing expertise in areas such as Strategic Planning, Fundraising, Meeting Governance, Conflict Resolution and Recruiting Volunteers. Her first workshop Fundraising for Your Neighborhood Project followed a grant workshop on January 12 at the North Port Library. Ms. Greaves will also attend your homeowner's association meetings by request and discuss a variety of topics.

- Call 861-5484 for a listing.

The Grant program has a category specifically for building neighborhood leadership. There are many resources provided to get you started in applying for a grant that will assist your community leaders. Attend a grant workshop and find out how.

A Citizen's Academy

Fall 2007 Civics 101 Graduates

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Cecile Alexander | Richard Kanter |
| Stuart Alexander | Patricia Klein |
| Doris Ash | John Krotec |
| Irving Ash | John McBride |
| Kelly Blake | Toby Miller |
| Karen Cadou | Charles Miller |
| Wendy Gingerich | Jack Reinks |
| Ann Goldstein | Jessica Ritter |
| Mort Goldstein | Ann Schwantz |
| Gail Harvey | Earl Schwantz |
| Claire Kanter | Wendy Sears Grassi |



Civics 101 is a class designed to provide a toolbox of resources on Sarasota County operations and services. The class will take you through the operations in Community Services, Emergency Services, Financial Planning, Health and Human Services, Planning & Development, Public Works, Public Communications and much more. Civics participants often find ways to give back to their community by volunteering. **Spring 2008 Class begins March 27th.**

Call 861-5145 for information or get an application at <http://neighborhoods.scgov.net>

How-to-Guide for Residential Solid Waste

Handle Trash! There is 16 page booklet to explain how.

Sarasota County Solid Waste has recently published a 16 page booklet on trash. It is so popular they can't keep it in stock. The guide includes instructions on the most common types of garbage, household hazardous waste, recyclables, disposal of used needles, and even what to do with old mattresses and televisions.

The participants of Civics 101 always want more time with the County staff from Solid Waste. They just can't learn enough about what happens to the items we don't want anymore. And what about those plastic bags we take home from the grocery store and the plastic water bottles that are recycled with the lids on them? County staff have some unique perspectives to share on the subject told in an enlightening yet humorous fashion. Sarasota County residents can be proud of recycling programs that have extended the 40-year-life of the landfill by 10 years.

Cigarette butts are litter too!

The Sarasota County Commission bans smoking on beaches in an effort to reduce litter. Keep Sarasota County Beautiful reports that the educational approach to reducing the amount of cigarette litter on our beaches was unsuccessful. Even the placement of butt containers at area beaches did not discourage smokers from littering.

Neighborhood meetings conducted by Parks and Recreation staff indicated that Sarasota County as a community was ready to support such a ban.

Smoking will be limited to parking areas and designated picnic areas. Enforcement of the ban will begin no later than March.

www.becauseitmatters.net

Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice has launched a civility initiative. Find out how your manners affect your health and quality of life.