

What We Are Doing

Did you know that among the 75 top emitting states and nations Florida is ranked 30th? Luckily, a lot is being done in our community to reduce our carbon footprint.

Citizens:

- Over 772,000 Florida homeowners have enrolled in FPL's "On Call" program to help reduce peak demand for electricity.
- Over 3,000 people in Sarasota County have pledged to save energy through the ENERGY STAR "Change A Light" campaign
- Over 340 Sarasota County residents have taken advantage of the state solar rebates to install solar technology on their homes or businesses

Businesses:

- Local businesses are increasingly building green, providing energy more efficiently and renewable energy services to their customers
- More than 45 businesses are saving water and energy through the County's "Green Business Partnership"

City of Sarasota:

- Signed U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement
- Joined the EPA's "WasteWise" program to reduce waste and increase recycling
- Became an EPA Energy Star Partner and ICLEI member focusing the city on improving global environmental conditions through local actions

Sarasota County:

- Signed the 2030 Challenge to design buildings to be significantly more energy efficient
- Established a green building incentive program and promotes smart-growth development
- Partnered with FPL to install the state's largest solar array at time of installation

UF/IFAS Extension:

- Hosts statewide participation in the national educational campaign on climate change, *Focus the Nation*
- Offers thousands of sustainability educational materials online and at local extension offices
- Presents educational programs in local communities that help citizens make informed choices on climate change and sustainable living

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Photo Sources :

Page 1: Department of Geosciences, Environmental Studies Laboratory, 2003

"We have the ability to solve this crisis and avoid the worst - though not all - of its consequences, if we act boldly, decisively and quickly. "

- Al Gore, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 2007



Check out these sustainability websites:

City of Sarasota: www.yourgreencity.sarasotagov.com

Sarasota County: www.scgov.net/sustainability

UF/IFAS Extension: www.sarasota.extension.ufl.edu,
www.solutionsforyourlife.com

Climate-Friendly Choices

What ***you*** can do to address climate change




Sarasota County
scgov.net | 941.861.5000 | TV19

UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
IFAS Extension

Climate Change and You

Climate change refers to changes in global wind patterns, rainfall and temperatures resulting from increases in levels of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere.

Greenhouse gases result from personal choices and behaviors, the burning of fossil fuels to power our vehicles and buildings, and agricultural and industrial activities. Solutions exist today to reduce our community's impact on the climate while building a local green economy.



How Climate Change Affects Florida

Florida is extremely vulnerable to hurricanes and storm surges. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 4th Assessment in 2007, Florida can expect 7-23 inches of sea level rise by the year 2100. An Environmental Protection Agency report and others estimate an even more extreme increase of 38 inches. Temperatures in Florida are projected to increase 3-4°F by the year 2100, which would wreak havoc on our sensitive environments such as salt marshes and mangroves.

What might happen in Sarasota County?

In our communities: A rising sea level could erode beachfront property, significantly increase the effect of storm surges and hurricanes, and force our community to put in place costly flood control infrastructure. The frequency of extremely hot days is expected to increase and the warmer habitat may contribute to the proliferation of pests and disease while decreasing air quality.

In our economy: The tourism industry could suffer from coastal impacts and increases in temperature and storm frequency. Insurance rates might increase due to heightened risk in our coastal community. Agricultural and forestry businesses may face uncertainty due to irregular weather patterns and drought. Altered pH levels and reduced oxygen in the water will most likely hurt the sport and commercial fishing industries.

In our environment: Sensitive habitats like salt marshes and mangroves may not be able to adapt to the rapid changes, further impacting our bay and vital marine nurseries. Plants and wildlife will be threatened by increasing invasive species, wildfires and decreasing viable habitat.

What is your Carbon Footprint?

Understand how your actions impact the climate. Calculate your carbon footprint by using a carbon footprint calculator like the ones

located at :

- www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator
- <http://coolclimate.berkeley.edu>
- www.terrapass.com

What you can do:

Work with your family to reduce your carbon footprint by following these tips:

In Your Home:

- Replace your conventional light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs
- Unplug “energy bandits” like cell phone chargers when not in use
- Turn your water heater thermostat down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Adjust your thermostat (lower in winter, higher in summer)
- Caulk and weather-strip around doors and windows to plug air leaks
- Wash clothes in warm or cold water, not hot
- Dry clothes on a clothesline instead of in a dryer
- Landscape using trees to shade south and west facing windows and native plants to limit mowing needs
- Install a solar hot water heater or photovoltaic system on your roof

On the Road:

- Whenever possible walk, bike, carpool or use public transportation
- When you buy a car, choose one that gets the best gas mileage possible
- Drive smarter avoiding rapid acceleration, idling and excessive weight in the trunk
- Keep your car tuned up, tires properly inflated and change the air filter regularly

In Your Diet:

- Whenever possible, buy locally grown and organic foods
- Shop at the local farmer’s markets
- Eat more meatless meals

In Your Lifestyle:

- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Buy less and buy minimally packaged goods with recycled content
- Purchase locally produced products
- Be an advocate: Talk to your friends and community leaders about climate-friendly choices.