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Philip Fairey joins the local ‘Conversation on Energy and Climate’

Philip Fairey, deputy director of the Florida Solar Energy Center, will deliver the keynote address at the local Community Conversation on Energy and Climate being held from 1-5 p.m. Wednesday, April 22, at the Venice Community Center, 326 S. Nokomis Ave., Venice. Fairey is author or co-author of four books and more than 80 technical articles. He currently serves on the Florida Building Commission of Energy’s Technical Advisory Committee.

Fairey brings more than 25 years experience in building science research to the workshop, which is part of the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives’ (ICLEI) “National Conversation on Climate Action.” The county is one of only 10 U.S. communities nationwide selected to participate. The public is encouraged to attend and admission is free.

“News headlines are dominated by reports of the struggling economy, job losses, energy independence and climate changes,” said Fairey. “There is a critical need for communities to take immediate and comprehensive action to cut energy use and emission and to rebuild local economies.”

The Florida Solar Energy Center is the largest and most active state-supported energy research center in the country. Current research activities include solar water and pool heating, solar electric and distributed generation systems, energy-efficient buildings, alternative transportation systems, hydrogen fuel and other energy areas.

The event coincides with Earth Day to encourage citizens nationwide to drive substantive, solutions-oriented dialogues about energy and climate action at the local level. In Sarasota County, community input from the event will be incorporated into a cross-jurisdictional Community Energy and Climate Action Plan to achieve energy savings and greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

Sarasota County is partnering with the cities of Sarasota, North Port and Venice, SCOPE and New College of Florida to host the workshop. In preparation, workshop organizers have been surveying residents about their energy priorities. So far, 90 percent of respondents rank energy efficiency as very important to addressing energy and climate change.

For more information about the national event, visit www.climateconversation.org. To respond to the energy and climate survey, or to learn more about the local event, visit www.scgov.net/Sustainability/EnergyConversation.asp or contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000.

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