

# Local Eco-Friendly Businesses

## Meet Some of Sarasota County's Green Business Partners



**T**he Green Business Partnership (GBP) is a program that encourages environmental stewardship and recognizes businesses and local governments that make an extra effort to operate in an environmentally responsible manner. The program was initiated through a grant awarded by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to Sarasota County. The following is insight into a few select Green Businesses and how they run their companies in eco-conscious ways.

To find out more, or to request a GBP packet, call Sarasota County at 941-861-5000 and ask to speak with the Recycling Coordinator. To check out the businesses currently GBP certified, visit [greenbusiness.scgov.net](http://greenbusiness.scgov.net), and click **Participating Businesses**.

### Whole Foods Market

#### Walking Their Talk. Reducing Their Footprint

Whole Foods Market not only provides their customers with environmentally friendly products ranging from organic produce to green household cleaners; the company is eco-friendly through and through, with green building practices in each of its stores to its decision to stop using plastic bags at checkout by Earth Day. They became a Green Business Partner in April 2007.

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They note: "Supporting wise environmental practices is part of our core values and strengthens our commitment to be a leader in environmental stewardship. This means making decisions that positively impact the health of our planet, its peoples, and its resources. Wind power, green building, and biodiesel are just a few examples. Each region and each store continually act on initiatives that support our Green Mission."

Some of their green initiatives include:

**2006 EPA Green Power Partner of the Year Award.** This award is given by the Environmental Protection Agency for achievements in advancing the development of the nation's green power market.

**Wind Power.** In January 2006, Whole Foods Market purchased renewable energy credits from wind farms to offset 100 percent of the electricity they use in all of their stores, facilities, and offices in the U.S. and Canada. Whole Foods Market is the only FORTUNE 500 Company to offset 100 percent of their electricity with wind energy credits.

**Green Construction.** They build their new stores with the environment in mind, using green building innovations whenever possible, including reducing the amount of virgin raw materials used in construction and choosing eco-friendly laminates, paint, and carpeting to minimize toxic resins and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) released into the atmosphere.

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).** The Sarasota store received LEED Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council, the first-ever environmentally friendly supermarket designed in accordance with the LEED Green Building Rating System. Their flagship store in Austin, Texas is also LEED certified, and there are three other stores in development that will also be LEED certified.

**First Retailer to Belong to All EPA Green Partnerships.** Whole Foods Market is the first retailer to belong to all four of the EPA's green partnerships: EPA Energy Star, EPA Climate Leaders, and EPA Green Chill. As an EPA Green Power Partner, Whole Foods wanted to further demonstrate their commitment and share results with the industry on energy-efficient design and technology upgrades (Energy Star), strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions like bio-diesel conversions, energy-usage reductions, green buildings, combined heat and power, as well as renewable energy generation (Climate Leaders), and ways to reduce their usage of refrigerants, both ozone depleting and non-ozone depleting, through strategies like secondary systems and distributed refrigeration (Green Chill).

**Incentives for Shoppers to Reuse Grocery Bags.** In an effort to encourage shoppers to reuse their grocery bring their bags, Whole Foods Market offers customers five cents per bag used. In addition, many stores also offer cloth-like, recycled plastic re-usable shopping bags to customers at a low price or as event giveaways.

**Biodiesel.** Nearly half (four out of nine) of their distribution centers use trucks that run on biodiesel fuel.

Visit [wholefoodsmarket.com](http://wholefoodsmarket.com) for more information about their Green Mission initiatives. Whole Foods is located at 1451 1st Street.

### Ringling Museum of Art

#### Eco-Conscious Community Landmark

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art received the Sarasota County Green Business Partnership certificate in 2007. The Ringling invests in multiple forms of environmental preservation: proper disposal of oil and chemicals utilized by the in-house conservation lab as well as estate light bulbs; recycling bins are provided at every employee desk and at points across the estate, resulting on average in 5,000 pounds of recycled paper per month; bathroom facilities that reduce water consumption; and strictly adhering to Sarasota County's new fertilizer and landscape management code.

Additionally, Treviso, the restaurant located on the estate and managed by Washington, D.C.-based Guest Services, Inc. will become one of the company's first locations to use locally grown



organic food this year. The restaurant, one of six managed by Guest Services in museums nationwide, is a member of the Green Restaurant Association and will be applying for the GRA's green certification this year.

Reminders about environmental conservation tips and resources are included in monthly staff e-newsletters, and employees are encouraged to suggest new conservation ideas, such as the use of low-cost organic cleaning products. With an eye on the future, Ringling Museum volunteers, staff, and supporters will continue to act as good stewards of the environment through adopting environment-conscious practices.

Visit [www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org) for more information. The museum is located at 5401 Bay Shore Rd.

### **Sarasota Memorial Health Care System Green Team Takes Action**

Sarasota Memorial Health Care System has been dedicated to reducing waste, conserving water and energy, and recycling materials for many years. SMHCS actively pursued membership in Sarasota County's Green Business Partnership in August of 2007 in order to demonstrate its environmental stewardship.

Leading the hospital's efforts is the SMHCS "Green Team," made up of staff members from across the organization. The group seeks to raise awareness among employees about the importance of conservation and also is involved in several community outreach programs, including adopting highways and hosting educational sessions throughout the year. Recently, the Green Team invited a presenter from The Climate Project to share a slideshow on



which the Academy Award-winning film *An Inconvenient Truth* is based.

A few of examples of the hospital's environmentally friendly practices include: recycling 278 tons of waste each year; replacing all lighting with energy-efficient fluorescent light bulbs in more than 10,000 fixtures; purchasing products in bulk or refillable containers to reduce packaging waste; recycling discarded electronic components; reclaiming water for cooling towers saving 80,000 to 100,000 gallons per day; using reclaimed water for all irrigation; using Florida Friendly landscaping; using environmentally friendly pest control.

Community members are invited to learn more about the hospital's Green Team by calling Deborah Warren at 941-917-1387.

### **WilsonMiller, Inc. Consulting with Conscience**

WilsonMiller, Inc., certified as a Green Business Partner in December 2007, is a planning, design, and engineering firm with a history of more than 50 years in professional consulting. The firm, whose Sarasota office is located at 6900 Professional Parkway East, plans to audit its 10 other locations according to checklists similar to Sarasota County's in cooperation with respective local governments and other organizations. WilsonMiller has worked closely with its property management company to replace incandescent lighting with energy-efficient fluorescent lighting and bolster recycling efforts to reduce disposable waste and related removal services. Additionally, they are developing a portal that will provide employees with bulletins, links to resources, document libraries, and other knowledge bases that will provide information on green practices.



### **Moneyjingle.com. Online Local Business Directory**

Moneyjingle.com is an Internet-based business directory that guides viewers to products and services for more than 50 different categories ranging from shopping to personal services to health care. The company has found ways to minimize its environmental impacts by carefully planning travel for customer visits to reduce fuel usage and making every effort to be "paperless" in all its communications.

**Other Green Businesses include: Dave's Auto Repair, Babe's Hardware of Englewood, Inc., Sunshine Defensive Driving School, Venice Golf & Country Club, Used Stuff, Inc., My Green Building, Kessler Consulting, Inc., Local Coffee & Tea, Architectural Design & Planning (ADP), Richard's Whole Foods, Sarasota Architectural Salvage, Aqua Plumbing & Air Conditioning, VR Allard & Associates, Ltd, Inc., Stantec Consulting Svcs, Inc., Sarasota Green Market Place, Inc., Mercedes Medical, Dr. Michael Hughes, Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, N&M Heating & Cooling, Shelby Financial Group, Positive Change Media, Waste Corp. of America, Green Building Pro, atLarge, Inc., Home Front Homes LLC Green Building Systems.**