

# Leaf it out....

February 21, 2024 – SWANA FL Winter Conference

Presented by:

**Brian Usher**  
Director

**Wendi Crisp**  
Outreach & Strategy  
Administrator

**Sarasota County**  
**Solid Waste**

# background



## 2000

- Yard waste survey

## 2009

- Focus group, research and proposal

## 2017

- Hurricane Irma debris recovery

## 2018

- Change in recycling processor

## 2019

- Single-stream recycling program roll-out and cart delivery

## 2020

- Single-stream recycling collection begins
- COVID-19 pandemic begins

## 2021

- Board assignment, research and recommendation

## 2022

- Market assessment
- Hurricane Ian debris recovery

## 2023

- Change in landfill operations contractor
- Leaf it out campaign

## 2024

- Franchise hauler contract set to expire

## 2024-2025

- Transition to new franchise haulers

Items not related to Leaf it out campaign appear in grey font

# campaign at a glance



## **Sarasota Herald-Tribune**

- 11 ads in Thursday ticket edition
- 11 ads in Sunday edition
- 50K impressions per month (digital advertising)

## **The Observer Group**

- 2 ads in East County edition
- 2 ads in main edition
- Special 8x10 insert in April 27 edition
- 300K impressions total (digital advertising)
- Enhanced banner April 10-16
- Cover tab sticker May

## **Venice Gondolier**

- 6 ads in Wednesday edition
- 7 ads in Saturday edition

## **The Daily Sun**

- 7 ads in Tuesday edition
- 7 ads in Saturday edition

## **Sun Weekly**

- 6 ads

## **iHeart Media**

- Approximately 370 :15 spots

## campaign at a glance cont.



### **Social media**

- 17 posts between March 13-May 1

### **Enplug (electronic advertising for county venues)**

- 11 county venues

### **Transit**

- 40 buses

### **Libraries**

- 9 venues

### **311**

- Staff mentioned the LIO campaign to callers with Solid Waste related questions, and to other callers when appropriate; approximately 2000 SW calls in both March and April

### **Newsletters (many recipients sent information out to their mailing lists)**

- County newsletter
- Neighborhood Services
- IFAS/Extension
- Governmental Relations

campaign at a glance cont.



#### Doorhangers

- 1,000

#### Postcards

- 145K

#### Television

- March 20 interview
- March 29 Suncoast View (live broadcast)
- April 19 interview
- Fox 13
- Channel 8
- Channel 10
- Telemundo (NBC)

#### Events

- Chamber Expo April 6
- The Meadows April 18
- Big Truck Day April 29

# messaging



## Phase 1 messaging

Sarasota County is making a change to the way yard waste materials are collected. For more information and a list of FAQ's, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout).

## Phase 2 messaging

Sarasota County is transitioning away from the use of plastic bags for yard waste materials. Effective May 1, 2023, yard waste materials must be placed in paper bags, reusable containers or bundled properly. For more information and a list of FAQ's, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout).

## Phase 3 messaging

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paid  
advertising

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### Sarasota Herald Tribune

Thursday Ticket ¼ page ad (4.91x9.95, full color, vertical)

Insertion dates for phase 1: March 9, 16, 23 and 30

Insertion dates for phase 2: April 7, 14, 21 and 28

Insertion dates for phase 3: May 4, 11 and 18

Sunday 1/8 page ad (4.91x4.92, full color, vertical)

Insertion dates for phase 1: March 12, 29 and 26

Insertion dates for phase 2: April 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30

Insertion dates for phase 3: May 7, 14 and 21

Digital ads (300x250, 300x600) on [herald-tribune.com](http://herald-tribune.com):

April 1-30 (50K)

May 1-26 (50K)

### The Observer Group

1/4 page ad (5.542"x9.833") in Sarasota and East County editions

Insertion date for phase 1: March 9

Insertion dates for phase 2: April 6

Insertion dates for phase 3: May 11

Special 8x10 (Bleed 8.75x11.25; trim 8.25x10.75; image 8x10.5) insert: April 27

Digital ads (300x250, 320x50, 970x66, 1200x630, 600x800, 970x250, 320x100) on [youobserver.com](http://youobserver.com):

Phase 1: March 1-31 (300K total campaign)

Phase 2: April 1-30

Phase 3: May 1-26

Front cover TAB ON sticker (2.875x2.625): May

paid  
advertising  
cont.

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### Venice Gondolier

Wednesday edition 1/5 page ad (6.625"x6", full color)

Insertion dates for phase 1 – March 29

Insertion dates for phase 2 – April 5, 12, 19 and 26

Insertion dates for phase 3 – 5/3

Saturday edition 1/5 page ad (6.625"x6", full color)

Insertion dates for phase 1 – March 25

Insertion dates for phase 2 – April 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29

Insertion dates for phase 3 – May 6

### The Daily Sun

Tuesday edition 1/5 page ad (6.625"x6", full color)

Insertion dates for phase 1 – March 28

Insertion dates for phase 2 – April 4, 11, 18 and 25

Insertion dates for phase 3 – May 2 and 9

Saturday edition 1/5 page ad (6.625"x6", full color)

Insertion dates for phase 1 – March 25

Insertion dates for phase 2 – April 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29

Insertion dates for phase 3 – May 6

### Sun Weekly

1/5 page ad (6.625"x6", full color)

Insertion dates for phase 1 – March 29

Insertion dates for phase 2 – April 5, 12, 19 and 26

Insertion dates for phase 3 – May 3



paid advertising cont.

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CURBING COSTS. INCREASING SUSTAINABILITY.

## Community Foundation names new president, CEO

Philip Lanham joins from Greater Cincinnati Foundation



LANHAM

PHILIP LANHAM, former president and CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, has been named as the next president and CEO of the Sarasota County Community Foundation. Lanham will make a significant impact on the foundation's operations, including overseeing the foundation's financial and operational performance. Lanham has a long history in the nonprofit sector, having served as CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation for over 15 years. He will be joining the Sarasota County Community Foundation in May 2023. Lanham's previous experience includes serving as CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, where he led the organization through a period of significant growth and expansion. He will be working closely with the foundation's board of directors and staff to ensure the foundation's continued success and impact on the community.

## AREA NEWS BRIEFS

### American League Riders to lay wreaths at Gaines Park

The American League Riders will be making a stop at Gaines Park on Wednesday, April 26, to lay wreaths on the graves of the players who died during the 1969-70 season. The group will be led by the American League Riders and will be accompanied by the Sarasota County Historical Society. The wreaths will be placed on the graves of the players who died during the 1969-70 season, including Jim Fregosi, Fred Lewis, and Tom Seaver.

### Home equity will be a key to success for the Sarasota County Community Foundation

The Sarasota County Community Foundation is looking for ways to increase its impact on the community. One key area of focus is home equity. The foundation is currently working on a program that will allow homeowners to donate their home equity to the foundation. This program will allow homeowners to receive a tax deduction for their donation, while the foundation will use the funds to support its various programs and services. The program is currently in the planning stages and is expected to launch in the near future.

### Scouts plan spaghetti fundraiser

The Scouts of the Sarasota County Council are planning a spaghetti fundraiser for the upcoming year. The fundraiser will be held at the Sarasota County Community Center on Wednesday, May 10, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The event will feature spaghetti, salad, and dessert. The proceeds from the fundraiser will be used to support the Scouts' various programs and services. Tickets are available for purchase at [scouts.org](http://scouts.org).

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1605 Main St., the mid-rise office building in the downtown area, is set to be completed in 2024.

1605 Main St., the mid-rise office building in the downtown area, is set to be completed in 2024. The building is a 16-story structure that will provide approximately 100,000 square feet of office space. The building is being developed by the Sarasota County Community Foundation and is expected to be completed in 2024. The building will be a significant addition to the downtown area and will provide much-needed office space for businesses in the area. The building is also expected to provide a significant boost to the local economy. The building is currently under construction and is expected to be completed in 2024. The building is a 16-story structure that will provide approximately 100,000 square feet of office space. The building is being developed by the Sarasota County Community Foundation and is expected to be completed in 2024. The building will be a significant addition to the downtown area and will provide much-needed office space for businesses in the area. The building is also expected to provide a significant boost to the local economy.

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- Outings • Exercise classes
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The details are taken care of so that you can live a carefree lifestyle. CALL US TODAY TO SCHEDULE YOUR OWN PERSONAL TOUR. 941-766-7991 20480 Veterans Blvd. Port Charlotte, FL 33954 Assisted Living Facility • 16588

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### Caleb Bradley

Real Estate Agent

10000 N. US Highway 90, Suite 100, Sarasota, FL 34238

941-555-1234

www.calebbradley.com

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www.farmandgarden.com

paid  
advertising  
cont.

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## iHeart Media

:15 spots (broadcast and streaming radio)

WDIZ-AM

WTZB-FM

WSDV-AM

WSRZ-FM

WCTQ-FM

Air dates – April 10-June 4

Ran approximately 370 spots

[Spot 1](#)

[Spot 2](#)

## social media



### Program announcement

March 13, 17, 22 and 27

Sarasota County is eliminating the option to use plastic bags for yard waste materials beginning May 1, 2023. Residents may continue to use plastic bags for yard waste materials through the transition months (March 1-April 28). For more information and a list of FAQ's, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout).

#SRQCountySolidWaste

### Alternative preparation

March 30; April 4, 8 and 12

As Sarasota County transitions away from the use of plastic bags for yard waste materials, residents should place yard waste materials in paper bags or reusable containers, or bundle materials together. Paper bags, containers and/or bundled materials should be no longer than four feet in length and no more than 40 lbs. in weight. For more information and a list of FAQ's, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout).

#SRQCountySolidWaste

### No bags beginning May 1

April 17, 21, 23, 25 and 27

For residents in unincorporated Sarasota County...beginning May 1, yard waste materials prepared in plastic bags will be will no longer be collected. For more information and a list of FAQ's, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout).

#SRQCountySolidWaste

### Today is the day

April 28, 29 and 30; May 1

Effective May 1, residents in unincorporated Sarasota County must prepare yard waste materials in paper bags or reusable containers, or bundle materials together. Paper bags, containers and/or bundled materials should be no longer than four feet in length and no more than 40 lbs. in weight. For more information and a list of FAQ's, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout). #SRQCountySolidWaste

# social media



Sarasota County Government

March 30 at 1:00 PM

As Sarasota County transitions away from the use of plastic bags for yard waste materials, residents should place yard waste materials in paper bags or reusable containers, or bundle materials together. Paper bags, containers and/or bundled materials should be no longer than four feet in length and no more than 40 lbs. in weight. For more information and a list of FAQs, visit [scgov.net/leafitout](http://scgov.net/leafitout). #SRQCountySolidWaste



Sarasota County Government

April 27 at 1:00 PM

For residents in unincorporated Sarasota County...beginning May 1, yard waste materials prepared in plastic bags will no longer be collected. For more information and a list of FAQs, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout). #SRQCountySolidWaste



Sarasota County Government

April 29 at 1:00 PM

Effective May 1, residents in unincorporated Sarasota County must prepare yard waste materials in paper bags or reusable containers, or bundle materials together. Paper bags, containers and/or bundled materials should be no longer than four feet in length and no more than 40 lbs. in weight. For more information and a list of FAQs, visit [www.scgov.net/leafitout](http://www.scgov.net/leafitout). #SRQCountySolidWaste



Sarasota County Government

May 1 at 9:00 AM

It's time to Leaf it Out! 🍂

Yard waste placed curbside in plastic bags will no longer be collected in unincorporated #SRQCounty after today.

#SRQCountySolidWaste Wendi Crisp reminds you to prepare your yard waste in paper bags, reusable containers or in bundles, keeping materials less than 40 pounds, less than four feet in length, and less than 16 inches in diameter.

Learn more at [scgov.net/leafitout](http://scgov.net/leafitout)





# mailing

### Postcard

One-time mailing (6"x4", full color)  
Approximately 145,000 residences

  
**Sarasota County**  
**Solid Waste**  
8750 Bee Ridge Road  
Sarasota, FL 34241



**Leaf it OUT!**  
*No plastic bags for yard waste.*

**Beginning May 1, 2023,**  
Sarasota County will no longer accept yard waste in plastic bags.

  
Questions? Scan QR code, contact Sarasota County at **311** or visit [scgov.net/leafitout](http://scgov.net/leafitout).



**CURBING COST. INCREASING SUSTAINABILITY.**

Created by Sarasota County Communications 4.3.23

media/video/interviews/  
press coverage



### Subject matter expert interviews

March 3 (internal)

March 20 (internal and ABC-7)

April 19 (internal and WFLA, WSTP and Telemundo)

### Suncoast View

March 29



media/video/interviews/  
press coverage



**Leaf it OUT!**  
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Sarasota County

The graphic features a woman in an orange shirt and blue pants raking a pile of colorful autumn leaves. To her right is a brown paper bag with a green checkmark and a black plastic bag with a red 'X'. The Sarasota County logo is in the bottom right corner.

## Press coverage

# County ban on plastic bags for yard waste starts May 1

Change eliminates need to open bags to dump waste for processing

By **BOB MUDGE**  
SENIOR WRITER

VENICE — As of May 1, Sarasota County will join the cities of Venice and North Port and Charlotte County in banning the use of plastic bags to put yard waste out for collection.

The reason is money, but somewhat indirectly.

Yard waste has to be removed from plastic bags at the Central County Landfill before it can be processed into mulch, Solid Waste Department Director Brian Usher told the County Commission last July.

It's a labor-intensive process, said Commissioner Ron Cutsinger, who pushed for the change.

"It's very difficult to find the workers to be out there all day taking this stuff, mostly manually, out of plastic bags," he told his colleagues.

And there's a lot of it, Usher said. In

Fiscal Year 2021, he said, the equivalent of more than 6.4 million 39 gallon heavy-duty plastic garbage bags had to be opened.

The estimated cost for FY2022 was more than \$300,000, he said, and the county's contractor was proposing an \$8-per-ton increase in the cost of processing yard waste in plastic bags.

The obvious question, he told the commissioners, was what the impact of a ban on plastic bags would be.

Not much, according to an online survey, Usher said.

It showed that 88% of the county's single-family customers don't use plastic bags for yard waste now and 90% supported a ban on them.

Only 8% of customers in multi-family communities use plastic bags, he said.

Given the option of paying extra to continue using plastic bags, only 13% said they'd be willing, he said.

No vote was taken that day because Usher's presentation was part of a package on amending the county's waste-collection ordinance that included a switch to the automated collection of solid waste.

Venice Gondolier Sun April 22, 2023

media/video/interviews/  
press coverage



#### Press coverage

<https://www.wfla.com/news/sarasota-county/leaf-it-out-sarasota-county-will-no-longer-accept-yard-waste-in-plastic-bags/>

<https://www.wtsp.com/amp/article/news/local/sarasotacounty/sarasota-county-stopping-yard-waste-plastic-bags/67-201d637d-2c6e-47a3-b688-a2653811bd89>

<https://www.telemundo49.com/noticias/anuncian-cambios-en-recoleccion-de-basura-en-sarasota/2194064/>

<https://www.mysuncoast.com/2023/04/27/may-1-deadline-leaf-it-out-program-approaching/>

<https://www.wfla.com/news/sarasota-county/sarasota-county-says-it-wont-accept-yard-waste-in-plastic-bags-left-at-curb/>

<https://www.wengradio.com/news/sarasota-county-bans-yard-waste-in-plastic-bags-starting-may-1st>



## other county outlets



### **County News**

SCGOV Weekly updates  
March 10, 27, 24 and 31  
April 7, 21 and 28  
May 5, 12

### **Neighborhood Services newsletter**

April and May

### **IFAS/Extension newsletters**

April and May

### **IFAS/Extension**

Blog and social media

### **Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Event Guide**

½ page ad in June-December 2023 edition

### **Libraries**

Flyers posted

### **Governmental Relations**

Flyer sent to email distribution list (Englewood Chamber, Greater Sarasota Chamber, Gulf Coast Latin Chamber, Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance, Manasota Black Chamber, North Port Chamber, Osprey Nokomis Chamber, Siesta Key Chamber and Venice Chamber)

North Port Chamber Chatter April 7  
Siesta Key Chamber May 1

# enplug, bus sign and banner



## Enplug

Displayed on the county's Enplug system during April and May.

## Bus sign

Displayed in transit buses during April and May.



## Banner

Displayed at Bee Ridge Chemical Collection Center and Central County Landfill



# outreach events



## The Greater Sarasota Chamber Expo

April 6

## The Meadows

April 18

## Big Truck Day

April 29



# doorhangers and stickers

**Sarasota County**  
**Leaf it OUT!**  
*No plastic bags for yard waste.*

This is a courtesy reminder from Sarasota County's Solid Waste department that the county is transitioning away from the use of plastic bags for yard waste materials.

**Why is this change taking place?**  
 Ordinance 2022-069 amending Chapter 106 of the County Code was adopted on Nov. 15, 2022 and eliminates the option to accept yard waste in plastic bags for processing at the Central County Landfill. This change helps support Sarasota County's commitment to environmental stewardship and will help reduce staffing challenges and associated costs.

**How do I properly prepare yard waste for collection?**  
 Place yard waste materials in paper bags, reusable containers or bundle for collection. Materials should be less than 4 feet in length, less than 40 lbs. and 16 inches or less in diameter.

**What happens if my yard waste is in plastic bags?**  
 Beginning May 1, yard waste in plastic bags will NOT be collected. Any yard waste material in plastic bags will be tagged and left at the curb. In order to have the materials picked up curbside, residents need to place the yard waste material in paper bags or reusable containers for collection on the next regularly scheduled collection day.

Continued

**CURBING COSTS. INCREASING SUSTAINABILITY.**

**Sarasota County**  
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**Will unprepared yard waste be collected?**  
 Unprepared yard waste will not be collected during regular weekly collection. Residents in unincorporated Sarasota County with unprepared yard waste can contact Waste Management for a bulk collection. Fees may apply.

**Can I throw my yard waste in the garbage?**  
 No. Yard waste materials are processed separately at the landfill and repurposed for use as daily cover or other agricultural applications. Keeping yard waste materials out of the garbage helps conserve space in the landfill, and when applied as daily cover, minimizes odor, reduces windblown litter, and discourages birds and animals from digging at the site.

**Questions?** Scan QR code, contact Sarasota County at 311 or visit [scgov.net/leafitout](http://scgov.net/leafitout).

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## Doorhangers

Solid Waste staff placed at residences through April 28



## Stickers

WM and Solid Waste staff placed on plastic bags after May 1

**Leaf it OUT!**  
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This is a courtesy notice from Sarasota County's Solid Waste department with a reminder that Sarasota County is no longer collecting yard waste materials in plastic bags effective May 1, 2023.

- Yard waste materials must be placed in paper bags, reusable containers or bundled properly for collection.
- Materials should be less than 4 feet in length, less than 40 lbs. and less than 16" diameter.
- Unprepared yard waste will not be collected during regular weekly collection.
- Residents with unprepared yard waste can contact Waste Management for a bulk collection. Disposal fees may apply.

**Sarasota County**  
 Questions? Scan QR code, contact Sarasota County at 311 or visit [scgov.net/leafitout](http://scgov.net/leafitout).

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scgov.net/leafitout



- Solid Waste

- Leaf It Out
- Solid Waste Service Area
- Trash and Recycling
- Hazardous Waste
- Landfill
- Construction and Demolition
- The Re-Uz-It Shop
- Sarasota County Recycles
- Hurricane Ian Solid Waste Recovery FAQ

Government - Solid Waste -

## Leaf It Out

Font Size [f](#) [+](#) [-](#) [Share & Bookmark](#) [Print](#)

**DO**

Place yard waste materials in paper bags, bundles or reusable containers for collection.

**Beginning May 1, yard waste materials in plastic bags at the curb will no longer be accepted.**

On Nov. 15, 2022, the county commission adopted Ordinance 2022-066, which amends Chapter 106 of the county code, eliminating the option to accept yard waste in plastic bags for processing at the Central County Landfill.

Many neighboring communities have eliminated plastic bags from their yard waste collection processes and require residents to use paper bags and/or reusable containers for curbside disposal. The elimination of plastic bags from the yard waste stream helps support Sarasota County's commitment to environmental stewardship and will help reduce staffing challenges and associated costs.

**TIMING**

**Between March 1-April 28**, residences that prepare yard waste in plastic bags will receive an informational door hanger with a reminder that plastic bags will no longer be accepted as of May 1.

**After May 1**, yard waste in plastic bags will NOT be collected. Any yard waste material in plastic bags will be tagged and left at the curb. In order to have the materials picked up curbside, residents should place the yard waste material in paper bags, reusable containers or bundles for collection on the next regularly scheduled collection day.

**DO NOT**

Place yard waste materials in plastic bags on/after May 1. They will not be collected.

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

- Why is this change taking place? >
- What happens if my yard waste is in plastic bags? >
- How do I properly prepare yard waste for collection? >
- What happens to my yard waste? >
- Will unprepared yard waste be collected? >
- I received a doorhanger. What should I do? >

# letter to municipalities



## Solid Waste

8750 Bee Ridge Rd.  
Sarasota, FL 34241  
941-861-5000  
scgov.net

DATE

NAME  
MUNICIPALITY  
ADDRESS  
CITY, ST ZIP

Dear NAME,

On November 15, 2022, the Sarasota County Commission adopted Ordinance 2022-069 amending Chapter 106 of the County Code. One of the changes to the ordinance eliminates the option to accept yard waste in plastic bags for processing at the Central County Landfill.

Sarasota County will be communicating this change to the public via a multi-media education outreach campaign.

During the transition months, March 1-April 28, doorhangers with reminders about the transition will be utilized for citizens that prepare yard waste in plastic bags.

Beginning May 1, Sarasota County's hauler will no longer collect yard waste materials that have been prepared in plastic bags and these bags will be tagged.

Please note that the elimination of plastic bags ONLY applies to yard waste. This change does not impact garbage or other industries.

If your citizens currently have the option to place yard waste materials in plastic bags for collection, please share this information with them accordingly. In an effort to have continuity across the municipalities for this campaign, Sarasota County is happy to co-brand outreach materials with your municipality's logo for use in your community.

Thank you for your understanding as we work through this transition.

Kindest Regards,

Brian Usher  
Director, Sarasota County Solid Waste



questions?



### How can we assist?

Brian Usher

Sarasota County Solid Waste

941-861-1532

[busher@scgov.net](mailto:busher@scgov.net)

Wendi Crisp

Sarasota County Solid Waste

941-861-6218

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