

Martin

COUNTY

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Earth Hour promotes responsible energy use

By Eric Wickstrom

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Earth Hour 2011, which encourages people and businesses to turn off their lights for one hour from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. to promote more responsible energy use, is Saturday.

Locally, Earth Hour is being co-promoted by Keep Martin Beautiful and The Firefly Group, a local public relations firm.

"Earth Hour is not merely about the one hour without power, it's about making long-term changes to the way we use energy both at school, at work and at home," said Stacy Ranieri, president of The Firefly Group.

"Our fireflies (employees) have committed to turn off their 'glow' in their homes for one hour, and we challenge residents and other businesses to do the same."

In 2007 in Sydney, Australia, a series of partnerships created the Earth Hour movement, which inspired 2 million people in one city to switch off their lights for one hour.

Since then, global landmarks such as the Golden Gate Bridge, Rome's Coliseum and the Coca-Cola billboard in Times Square have spent one hour in the dark to promote more responsible

energy use and environmental sustainability.

By 2010, Earth Hour had participation across 128 countries and every continent.

Earth Hour is on the web at www.earthhour.org, and is being promoted locally as well on Facebook pages for Keep Martin Beautiful and The Firefly Group. Both groups hope to have individuals posting about their plans to support Earth Hour.

"At this early point, we're not sure what individuals and companies are going to be involved, but we look forward to seeing the information posted on our Facebook sites soon," said Jessica Layne of the Firefly Group.



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