



Description of Sarasota:

Pop. 52,500

25.93 square miles, which translates to a fairly low density of roughly 2,000 inhabitants per square mile, characterized by single-family homes and a small downtown area clustered around Main Street, with maybe two dozen condo and office high-rise buildings. However, the city is surrounded by fast-growing suburbs, administered by Sarasota and Manatee County. The Sarasota-Bradenton-Venice statistical metropolitan area includes 673,000 people.

The median household income in the city is \$34,000; 16.7 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Distribution of income is fairly unequal, with high concentrations of millionaires residing along the Bay Shore and on the keys.

Solar energy use for water heating has expanded gradually over the past decade; photovoltaic is just beginning. FPL has built one large-scale photovoltaic power plant in DeSoto County, 40 miles east of Sarasota. Sarasota has a humid subtropical climate, with an average 238 sunny days per year.

Wind intensity is too low for deployment of modern wind turbines, according to FPL. However, there is a constant breeze along the Gulf of Mexico coast. The only large-scale wind project in Florida is FPL's St. Lucie facility on the Atlantic coast.

Biomass: The main agricultural activity around Sarasota is cattle ranching, with some tomato and citrus cultivation. Forestry is minimal; the natural setting is the savanna-like hammock.

Hydro or tidal power: Sarasota is situated on a bay, and separated by a chain of barrier islands from the Gulf of Mexico. There are slow-flowing creeks and bayous. The area is prone to flooding and tropical storms/hurricanes from August through November.

Geothermal or Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP) is Air Conditioning Systems that use the ground water in the refrigerant cycle.

Current Utility – Florida Power & Light (FPL)

In 1928, the city sold its municipal power company to FPL. The investor-owned, regulated utility continues to be the sole electricity provider today. FPL has supplied power under 30-year de facto monopoly franchise agreements, under which power customers pay a 5.9-percent franchise fee to FPL, who then passes it on to the city. There are no underground power lines, except for the downtown core.