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## Leon County students go 'green' for Earth Day at the Capitol

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Mother Nature is getting plenty of attention today as public-school students and agencies celebrate Earth Day.

A string of activities are planned around the city, including an event at the Capitol courtyard where more than 1,000 students are expected to attend. These events are coordinated through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and other agencies.

Greg Ira, director of the Office of Environmental Education at DEP, said there's been "such a surge of interest" partly because of media coverage on issues like climate change and Gov. Charlie Crist's policy on energy conservation.

At the Capitol, "Green Teams" from the Leon County School District will do carbon footprints for students, conduct a scavenger hunt and talk about iRecycle, which is the district's renewed initiative to recycle.

Merry Ortega, director of secondary schools, said, "It is wonderful to see high-school students taking the lead and sharing the responsibility for informing the community about their efforts related to recycling."

Other events include:

- 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.: Capital Circle Office Center (lawn between building 4025 and Shuster's Cafe, near SouthWood) — Visitor vendors like New Leaf Market, Sustainable Tallahassee, Florida Wildlife Federation and more, along with a tree-planing event. It's sponsored by the Florida Department of Health.
- 5:30 to 9 p.m. at the Civic Center: See products on sustainable/green innovations at it relates to construction. Parking and admission is free. It's sponsored by the Florida Capitol Region Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council.