

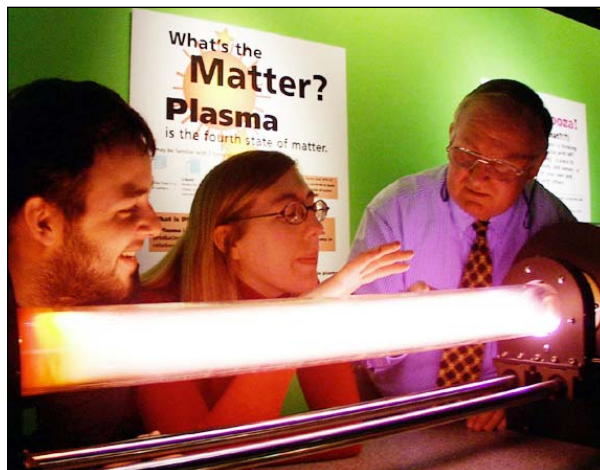
American Physical Society Invites Orlando to Discover Plasma

Public invited to “Play with Plasma”

Orlando—We live on a planet where we are surrounded mainly by matter in the familiar states of solid, liquid and gas. But many of us are not aware of a fourth state of matter – plasma. People in the Orlando area may be better informed than most. In 2002 the American Physical Society - Division of Plasma Physics (APS-DPP), as part of their yearly meeting, brought its series of plasma education events to Orlando. Hundreds of enthusiastic local teachers, students and members of the general public took the opportunity to explore this state of matter. The APS-DPP is back in Orlando the week of November 12, once again presenting a variety of popular plasma education programs, free-of-charge.

Until recently plasma was rarely mentioned in high school textbooks, though matter in the plasma state makes up 99% of the visible universe. Our sun, stars, northern lights, solar flares and lightning bolts are all examples of naturally occurring plasmas. Man-made plasmas are used for lighting (fluorescent lights), sterilizing medical equipment, welding, manufacturing computer chips, fusion energy research and even surgery.

The main event for the general public will be a special Plasma Sciences Expo, November 15, 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the Rosen Center Hotel, geared to introduce the local community to the excitement of plasmas and the benefits of plasma research. Scientists from around the country and the world will be there, ready to engage participants in lively hands-on demonstrations and explorations. Those attending will be able to create arcs of lightning, observe their fluctuating body temperature on a special monitor, manipulate a glowing plasma with magnets, and learn how to confine a plasma in a fusion device by playing a video game. Students at all levels, teachers, parents and the general public are welcome. The Expo will also be open during the day on November 15 and 16 for local school field trips.



Demonstrations of plasma, its mystery, beauty and power, will be available at the Plasma Sciences Expo, scheduled for local schools on November 15 and 16. The general public is invited to explore the exhibits on Thursday, November 15, from 6 PM to 8 PM.

Local teachers will receive a special day of training on “Teachers Day,” Tuesday, November 13. Teachers will attend morning and afternoon workshops about plasma and related science. Many will learn how to bring the study of plasma into their classrooms, a valuable skill consistent with national science standards and the Sunshine State Standards for Science.

Education programs will also be visiting local schools. Throughout the week scientists and teachers will be in the area, presenting hands-on science experiences to local students.

Contributing laboratories, industries, academic institutions, and government agencies include: Contemporary Physics Education Project (CPEP); General Atomics; Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; The Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science, Tallahassee; MIT Plasma Science & Fusion Center; Oak Ridge Institute for Science Education; Oak Ridge National Laboratory; Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory; Space Science Institute; University of Central Florida; University of Texas at Austin; U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Fusion Energy Sciences, U.S. Department of Energy Defense programs and more.