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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Miami Beach Encourages Residents and Visitors to Prepare for Mosquito Season**

*—Working Proactively and Aggressively to Ensure the Health and Wellness of the City—*

**Miami Beach, FL** – With mosquito season around the corner, the City of Miami Beach has been working diligently and vigorously throughout the year to keep mosquito-borne illnesses at bay.

“Since the increased awareness in South Florida of health threats such as Zika, City staff has worked year-round to ensure the safety and wellness of both our residents and visitors,” noted City Manager Jimmy L. Morales. “Our community proves adaptive, durable and overall resilient when faced with shocks such as this and we remain united, bold and thus effective in our efforts. I have no doubt I’ll be witnessing that same energy and dedication this summer as we begin increasing the preventative measures we already have in place, as well as putting forth additional strategies in motion to keep Miami Beach normal and thriving throughout the summer and beyond.”

The City’s strategy is simple and effective: take every opportunity to educate, collaborate and protect. These specific actions and procedures include:

- **Public Works:** The department requires that all right of way permits include provisions to prevent standing water. Inspectors patrol all rights of way under construction in the City to be sure standing water is addressed by permit holders. Stormwater operators additionally remove standing water in public rights of way via portable pumps or vacuum trucks, applying larvicide and working more frequently in areas where mosquitoes may breed.
- **Parks & Recreation:** As part of daily inspection and sanitation activities, Park Division staff members monitor and dispose of ponding water. All parks are on a pressure washing cycle, which provides an additional layer of abatement for standing water. In addition, grounds maintenance services are conducted on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, this include mowing, trimming, edging, irrigation checks and more to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds. Recreation staff is working toward the same goal, applying larvicides at recreation programming sites when necessary and working alongside Miami-Dade County to mitigate problem areas with cleanups. All staff members are trained with

respect to mosquito mitigation practices. Free bug repellants are also available at every park and facility in the City throughout the entirety of mosquito season. Additionally, parents of program participants are asked to sign a waiver if they would like to have their child apply repellent either by themselves or with staff assistance.

- **Code Compliance:** Code officers have already begun stagnant water inspections to prevent and/or reduce conditions that are conducive to mosquito breeding. Staff is currently undergoing refresher training on how to identify these potential hazards and how to protect themselves. They are also distributing informational pamphlets and verbal updates at HOA, neighborhood meetings and community events. Working closely with Miami-Dade County, MetroLab and the University of Miami, the team is consistently developing and sharing methods on how to prevent and respond to mosquito-borne illnesses. Actions taken year-round to further prevent breeding grounds include: removal of sidewalk café planters and an increase in community outreach. Overall, the department is conducting strict enforcements for ponded water, issuing fines to contractors at construction sites, sidewalk cafes and homes if necessary.
- **Building:** To support the administering of ponded water inspections on every permit type, the department adopted a ponded water Standard Operation Procedure. Encouraging safe and sanitary construction practices, the team has also begun communicating with contractors of active construction sites throughout the City to ensure they are doing their part by draining and covering standing water.
- **Capital Improvement Projects:** CIP inspectors visit construction sites to inspect for standing water and instruct contractors to remove any standing water that may exist. They provide tablet repellents to contractors who are instructed to place the repellents inside drainage structures. Sweepers and vacuum Trucks are utilized to remove any standing water that may be present on a jobsite daily. The department's outreach team also sends notifications to resident databases with information about the city's anti-mosquito efforts and how residents can do their part. If a staff member identifies standing water on private property, a request is sent to the appropriate code enforcement manager to handle immediately.
- **Housing & Community Services:** While conducting homeless outreach, staff is always equipped with repellent to offer clients as they engage. Additionally, the team provides free dispensers at the walk-in center and informative print flyers and brochures regarding mosquito season upon request.

Proper precautions such as draining standing water, covering receptacles that collect water and using bug repellent have been imperative to the City's success. As such, the City is encouraging all residents and visitors to do their part in safeguarding themselves and their homes this summer while stressing the importance and significant benefits of these small protective acts. In addition, Miami-Dade County continues to conduct their regularly scheduled larvicide truck treatments throughout the City.

To learn more about the County's initiatives in combatting mosquito-borne illnesses, including their truck spraying schedule, [click here](#).

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