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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Miami Beach Phases Out Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers

— The new ordinance includes an 18-month transition period —

Miami Beach, FL – The Miami Beach City Commission voted unanimously on Thursday to phase out gasoline-powered leaf blowers as part of the city’s commitment to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Commissioner Mark Samuelian, who sponsored the ordinance, said there are a number of alternative options for residents who wish to keep their properties tidy and manage grass and landscaping cuttings.

“Portable or plug-in electric leaf blowers are just as effective as gas-powered units, and they avoid the pollution and greenhouse gas emissions,” Samuelian explained.

Similar to the city’s regulation on polystyrene and plastic straws/stirrers, the new ordinance will follow a phased implementation approach. This includes a nine-month educational period from Feb. 1 – Oct. 31 followed by a nine-month warning period from Nov. 1 to Jul. 1, 2023. Full enforcement will commence on Aug. 1, 2023.

“This ordinance will also help mitigate other environmental impacts such as air pollution and water quality,” Samuelian noted. The measure was co-sponsored by Commissioners Alex Fernandez, Steven Meiner and David Richardson.

Cities that have limited or phased out the use of gasoline-powered blowers include Naples and Key West, Florida; Greenwich, Connecticut; Westchester, New York; Burlington, Vermont; Cambridge, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. California is phasing out the sale of small gas-powered engines, many of which are used in lawn and garden equipment like leaf blowers.

An estimated two ounces of gasoline are spilled every time a gas-powered leaf blower is filled. The California Air Resources Board reported that running a gas-powered leaf blower for one hour emits the same amount of pollution as driving a light-duty passenger vehicle for approximately 1,100 miles. Gas-powered leaf blowers have also been the source of numerous noise complaints in Miami Beach and other cities around the country.

The Miami Beach Public Works Department has phased out the majority of gasoline-powered leaf blowers and will fully transition by spring of 2022. Third-party landscaping contactors for the city have already been directed to suspend the use of gasoline-powered blowers. To assist the community in transitioning away from gas-powered leaf blowers, the city is working with

local hardware stores to establish community discounts on qualifying new equipment as well as a possible rebate program. Visit www.mbrisingabove.com/leafblowers for more information.

Initial violations of the new ordinance in a 12-month period carry a \$250 fine. The second violation in a 12-month period carries a \$500 fine while the third violation and each additional violation in a 12-month period carries a \$1,000 fine.

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