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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Butts Out on Public Beaches and Parks in Miami Beach — *New Year's Day Ushers in City's New Cigarette Smoking Ban* —

Miami Beach, FL – Miami Beach residents and visitors are going butts out on New Year's Day as the city's new smoking ban takes effect at the stroke of midnight in all municipal parks and public beaches.

"Our beautiful beaches and parks just got a little more pristine," observed Miami Beach City Commissioner Alex Fernandez, who sponsored the measure at the body's July 20 meeting. "We want our residents and visitors to continue to enjoy our beaches without having to worry about cigarette butts and the microplastics contained within them, which pose a serious threat to seabirds, sea turtles and other marine life."

"Smoking" is defined by the ordinance as "inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying, or possessing any lighted tobacco product, including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco and any other lighted tobacco product with the exception of unfiltered cigars." The new ordinance carries a \$100 fine or up to 60 days in jail for the first violation within a 12-month period.

In preparation for the Jan. 1 implementation date, the City of Miami Beach launched an educational marketing campaign dubbed "#NoFilter." All city beaches and parks will incorporate new signage alerting residents and visitors to the smoking ban starting on New Year's Day.

"This paradise is an important economic engine," Fernandez added. "Cigarette butts are not the butts our 18 million visitors want to see. This new law will help keep our paradise clean and beautiful."

The marketing campaign had garnered more than 60,000 impressions on the city's social media accounts as of the end of 2022 and was included twice in the city's biweekly email newsletter that is sent to more than 29,000 email addresses. The winter issue of MB magazine, which is scheduled to arrive at all Miami Beach homes during the first week of January, features an in-depth article on the ban while bus shelters will also feature educational messages starting in January 2023.

According to marine nonprofit Ocean Conservancy, cigarette butts have been the most commonly recovered item during three decades of the organization's annual International Coastal Cleanup. The butts affect humans when people consume fish that have ingested them, Ocean Conservancy said.

Commissioner Fernandez will be available for interviews on Sunday, Jan. 1 by emailing alex@miamibeachfl.gov to schedule a time.

WHAT: Cigarette Smoking Ban

WHEN: Jan. 1, 2023

WHERE: Miami Beach Public Beaches and Parks

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