



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

OFFICE OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS, Melissa Berthier
Tel: 305.673.7575, E-mail: melissaberthier@miamibeachfl.gov

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 11, 2017

Miami Beach Continues Commitment to Phase-Out Polystyrene — *Ban to Extend to Unencapsulated Polystyrene Docks on Private Property* —

Miami Beach, FL – Today the Miami Beach Commission approved the prohibition of uncovered/unencapsulated polystyrene docks on private property, addressing both existing and new docks, as well as including other types of encapsulation options. The phase-out process will mirror the original polystyrene ban and will begin to be implemented as early as March 1, 2017.

“Eliminating the use of exposed polystyrene in the city’s waterways will inevitably reduce the breakdown of this potentially hazardous material in the environment,” explained Miami Beach Commissioner John Elizabeth Alemán. “Over time, this alternative will improve the cleanliness of our city’s waterways and ensure that sensitive marine habitats are protected.”

As early as 2007, regulating agencies of the U.S. federal government have required all new construction (or upgrades of existing facilities) to not use unenclosed foam dock flotation or other installation that results in the break up and trashing of the waterways.

Floating docks that used exposed, open cell, expanded polystyrene foam (EPS) present a continuous impact to the city’s waterways. Environmental impacts associated with EPS and other plastics used for flotation include: the rate of degradation (water and sunlight), ingestion of particles by fish and wildlife, exposure to chemical elements such as benzene, styrene and ethylene, and unsightly aesthetics due to floating particles.

“I’m elated the city has taken such an important stance on protecting our waterways,” said Dave Doebler, chairperson of the city’s Citizen Sustainability Committee and avid kayaker.

Encapsulating the flotation eliminates the breaking down of the foam and enables the flotation to last longer. The hard plastic exterior does not allow marine borers (mussels, barnacles, pile worms, etc.) to dig into and breakup the foam resulting in the loss of buoyancy. In addition,

exposed foam has a tendency to absorb gas, oil and other contaminants in the water. This will result in further breakdown of the foam and the retention of unwanted odors.

Similar to the first Miami Beach polystyrene ban, this will be a phase-out process that applies to unencapsulated expanded polystyrene floating docks, platforms and buoys. Fines range from \$50 up to \$2,000 for multiple offenses. Phase one will commence this March, providing public and education outreach. Phase two will follow from September 1, 2017 through March 1, 2018, with written warnings for offenses. And finally, the complete elimination in phase three on March 2, 2018 will financially penalize those not abiding by the ordinance.

For more information on how Miami Beach continues its efforts of being foam free, visit www.mbrisingabove.com.

###

To request this material in alternate format, sign language interpreter (five-day notice required), information on access for persons with disabilities, and/or any accommodation to review any document or participate in any city-sponsored proceedings, call 305.604.2489 and select 1 for English or 2 for Spanish, then option 6; TTY users may call via 711 (Florida Relay Service).