

For Immediate Release

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**Melanoma Foundation of New England and Make Big Change
Team Up with City of Boston to Offer
FREE Sunscreen Dispensers in Boston Parks**

BOSTON, Mass. - Mayor Martin J. Walsh announced today a joint partnership with the [Melanoma Foundation of New England \(MFNE\)](#) and [Make Big Change \(MBC\)](#) to provide free sunscreen dispensers in public parks in the City of Boston. This initiative is in response to the Surgeon General's 2014 Call to Action to address skin cancer as a major public concern. Boston will be the first major city in the Northeast to initiate this program, currently in effect in Miami Beach, Florida. The partnership will begin with a pilot program of 30 initial sunscreen units distributed through the Boston Parks & Recreation Department to the Boston Common, Christopher Columbus Park (North End), East Boston Memorial Park (East Boston), Jamaica Pond (Jamaica Plain) and Millennium Park (West Roxbury).



Dispensers will be installed at all locations the week of June 22nd, just in time for the opening of the Frog Pond (official opening ceremony on July 1st). Following the pilot launch, MFNE and MBE will spearhead a widespread installation throughout Boston and beyond.



"Preventing skin cancer is a public health imperative," said Mayor Martin J. Walsh. "Strategically placed sunscreen dispensers offer the public an easy preventive measure to avoid sun overexposure. We are proud to be the first Northeast city to pilot this program and thank MFNE and MBC for stepping forward as partners."

MFNE will subsidize the cost and procurement of the sunscreen dispensers at no cost to taxpayers through private and corporate sponsorship donations, and funds raised by MFNE's *Running for Cover*, one of the Boston Athletic Association's® Official Charity Teams for the Boston Marathon. MFNE will also use this platform to expand their year-round public education programs aimed at melanoma prevention and detection. MBC is the New England provider of state-of-the-art automated sunscreen dispenser units, and will provide the units for distribution. Since 2014 MBC has worked to place sunscreen-dispensing devices across high-traffic areas in New Hampshire including public parks and beaches.

City Councilor Matt O'Malley first proposed a city-wide sunscreen initiative in April at a Boston City Council meeting. O'Malley is delighted that this program has taken off so quickly, stating: "Skin cancer and melanoma are among the most prevalent cancers.

They're also among the most preventable. I am proud to partner with Mayor Walsh, the Melanoma Foundation of New England and Make Big Change to provide sunscreen dispensers to residents and

tourists as well as increase awareness of the importance of protecting your skin. Once again, Boston will lead the way."

Surgeon General calls skin cancer major public concern

In 2014 the Surgeon General issued a Call to Action to governments, health care officials, groups, families, and individuals across the nation to address skin cancer as a major public health concern. According to the Call to Action, as many as 90% of melanomas are likely to have been caused by UV exposure, which is highly preventable through proper sun safety measures and avoidance of cosmetic UV exposure, like tanning beds. Melanoma rates are increasing faster than nearly all other cancers.

According to Deb Girard, Executive Director of MFNE, "We know that if used correctly, sunscreen decreases the risk of skin cancer. We are thrilled to be working with the City of Boston and Make Big Change to make these units accessible in Boston. We are grateful to have this platform to educate the public on the dangers of sun exposure and skin cancer prevention."

"We're pleased to be joining forces with the MFNE and the City of Boston," said Make Big Change Executive Director, Laurie Seavey. "While we pride ourselves on creating awareness of skin cancer through engaging demonstrations of our sunscreen dispensing devices, MFNE is the authoritative voice when it comes to driving effective educational initiatives in support of diminishing the occurrences of melanoma. Through this partnership, we can really add a dynamic element to the educational component of MFNE's mission. Together we will make big change."

The facts about Melanoma:

Melanoma is a deadly, yet highly preventable form of skin cancer. This year alone over 10,000 people in the United States will die from melanoma - that's one person every 50 minutes. Melanoma is the 2nd most common cancer in teens and young adults 15-29, and the most common cancer in men over the age of 50. The incidence of melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer, is rising faster than that of any other cancer and is a relatively easy disease to prevent: Most melanomas are easy to stop if caught soon enough — all it takes is a yearly skin exam. The New England states have a higher than average rate of melanoma.

Free sunscreen dispensers offer all-natural sun protection:

The sunscreen dispensers that will be offered by MFNE and MBC are weather resistant, low maintenance dispensers that hold a 1000 mL bag of sunscreen, for 670 applications per bag. The all-natural SPF-30 sunscreen that will be stocked in the dispensing units is safe for people aged 6-months and up with an all-natural blend of 6% zinc and 6% titanium. All of the ingredients will be printed on the machines upon installation, and are available upon request.

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About the Melanoma Foundation of New England

The Melanoma Foundation of New England (MFNE) was founded in 1999 by Mel and Marilyn Rubin in memory of their son Mark who lost his battle with the melanoma. MFNE's mission is to reduce the incidence of melanoma in the New England region. We provide a [variety of educational programs](#)

targeting the prevention and early detection of skin cancer and melanoma for both children and adults. MFNE also assists patients and their caregivers struggling with melanoma by offering [support groups](#), [educational programs](#), and [Billy's Buddies](#), a one-on-one patient advocacy and support program. These programs are all free. The Melanoma Foundation of New England is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

About Make Big Change:

Make Big Change is an action-oriented non-profit organization wholly dedicated to fostering progressive steps towards reducing the incidence of skin cancers across New England through educational awareness and strategic prevention initiatives. The impetus behind forming Make Big Change was the recognition that we must act now. Without adequate support, education, and prevention initiatives, the destruction caused by this deadly disease will continue to skyrocket.

The primary focus of 2015 has been to place sunscreen-dispensing devices across high-traffic areas across New England. The goal of this initiative is to increase the use of sunscreen by easing access while outdoors at public parks, playgrounds, soccer fields, baseball parks, beaches, etc. Make Big Change is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

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KORTENHAUS COMMUNICATIONS
75 Newbury Street
Boston, MA 02116 | 3rd Floor
[617-536-5352](tel:617-536-5352) (Office)
www.kortenhaus.com