

MIAMI

Miami opens first public restroom in effort to keep streets clean

Structure has sink, toilet and place to dispose of needles

By Tim Swift - Local10.com Digital Editor



MIAMI - To an effort to address Miami's homelessness problem, city officials unveiled a new permanent public restroom Wednesday.

Outside the Miami-Dade Main Public Library, the restroom cost more than \$300,000 to build and is equipped with a toilet, sink and a place to safely dispose of needles. An attendant will staff the restroom, which will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. seven days a week.



"This permanent solution has proven successful because it provides a dignified option for users while reducing human waste on the streets significantly," the city said in a statement.

The city went ahead with the permanent structure after a pilot program installed portable toilets downtown. That program was credited with keeping city streets cleaner.

The structure is based on a design pioneered in Portland, Oregon. More than a dozen cities have installed "Portland Loos," which are easy to clean and repel graffiti. With vents along the top and bottom of the structure, the design also provides limited privacy to discourage illegal activity inside.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Eileen Higgins called the restroom "a symbol of our belief that these amenities aren't a privilege, but a right."