



NEWS RELEASE

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Connecticut Study Verifies the Safety of Synthetic Turf

Study conducted by four state agencies shows no elevated health risks for children or adults

(Atlanta, GA.) – On July 30, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CDPH) announced that a new study of the risks to children and adults playing on synthetic turf fields containing crumb rubber infill shows “no elevated health risks.” The study further validates the conclusions and recent studies of the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other governmental agencies, including the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Department of Health, the New York City Department of Health, and the California EPA.

“This study presents good news regarding the safety of outdoor artificial turf fields,” stated Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. J. Robert Galvin. “While the findings indoors were below the health risk targets, the elevated contaminant levels suggest a need to ventilate these fields so they can be brought to the level of safety outdoors. What we’ve learned from this study in Connecticut will provide valuable guidance to municipalities, schools and others who operate or are considering installing artificial playing fields.”

Four state agencies – the University of Connecticut Health Center, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, the Department of Public Health and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) – collaborated on the study. Nine scientists from the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE) were asked to review the study and issue its own report.

Among the study’s major findings:

- “Outdoor and indoor artificial turf fields are not associated with elevated health risks from the inhalation of volatile or particle bound chemicals.”
- The readings at the indoor field (in a building with a broken exhaust system) showed higher levels of chemical emissions, but, as noted above, below levels of concern. The DEP recommends ventilation of indoor fields.
- The Department of Environmental Protection evaluated the environmental risk associated with storm water runoff from the artificial turf fields tested in the air study. Of eight storm water samples collected, three samples contained zinc concentrations that exhibited acute toxicity to two aquatic organisms. They concluded there is no risk to drinking water from this runoff, but a potential risk exists for surface waters and aquatic organisms. The DEP also suggests that use of storm water treatment measures may reduce the concentrations of zinc in the storm water runoff from artificial turf fields to levels below the acute aquatic toxicity criteria. [Note: Using different test methods, the EPA and NY State Department of Environmental Conservation determined that zinc levels were well below levels of concern, even to aquatic life.]

It is noteworthy that CASE -- the expert panel of nine scientists that reviewed the study and report of findings -- was exceedingly critical in its report of the so-called 'headline' conclusion of the Connecticut study: "Their 'headline' conclusion... 'Results indicate cancer risks slightly above *de minimus* levels for all scenarios evaluated..." fails to indicate that such risks are highly improbable, reflecting a series of systematic overestimates of exposure and risk, and including a contaminant that is almost certainly not actually off-gassing from the crumb rubber."

"In over 40 years of EPA oversight and OSHA regulated manufacturing, there has never been an instance of illness attributed to synthetic turf. This study and numerous others validate the long-term human health and environmental safety of synthetic turf systems," said Rick Doyle, president of the Synthetic Turf Council. "Consider too synthetic turf's environmental benefits -- in 2009, 5,200 synthetic turf sports fields in the U.S. saved over four billion gallons of water, and eliminated the use of millions of pounds of toxic pesticides & fertilizers."

The Connecticut study can be viewed at www.ct.gov/dep/artificialturf. Visit www.syntheticurfCouncil.org for a full list of studies, reports and official position statements.

About the Synthetic Turf Council:

Based in Atlanta, the Synthetic Turf Council was founded in 2003 to promote the industry and to assist buyers and end users with the selection, use and maintenance of synthetic turf systems in sports field, golf, municipal parks, airports, landscape and residential applications. The organization is also a resource for current, credible, and independent research on the safety and environmental impact of synthetic turf. Membership includes builders, landscape architects, testing labs, maintenance providers, manufacturers, suppliers, installation contractors, infill material suppliers and other specialty service companies. For more information, visit www.syntheticurfCouncil.org.

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