



NEWS RELEASE

DATE: October 30, 2009

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California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment Review Verifies Safety of Synthetic Turf

(Atlanta, GA.) – Representing the latest convincing data on the safety of synthetic turf, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), California Environmental Protection Agency, released a report last week dated July 2009 which indicated there is a negligible human health risk from inhaling the air above synthetic turf. The OEHHA summary also stated “it is unlikely that the new generation of artificial turf is itself a source of MRSA.”

OEHHA searched the available literature related to the safety of new generation artificial turf fields, those which contained crumb rubber infill. They analyzed whether these fields emitted levels of chemicals or particulates into the air that are a health risk when inhaled, and also any potential risk factors for MRSA infection. Based on the data from two 2009 New York studies and a 2006 report of indoor fields, they found that “Both reports concluded that these fields did not constitute a serious public health concern, since cancer or non-cancer health effects were unlikely to result from these low-level exposures.” Other key findings included:

- Analyzing the chemicals detected above the fields in New York, OEHHA noted that “many of these occurred at similar concentrations in the air sampled upwind of the fields” - which suggests that the source of these chemicals was not from the turf fields.
- Cancer risks are negligible, lower than many common human activities. OEHHA created a test scenario to determine the exposure and health risks of an athlete playing on an artificial turf field from age five until age 55 for nearly 100 chemicals. The results showed an exposure to five chemicals with a lifetime cancer risk above one in one million, which is considered a negligible risk. As OEHHA explains “these estimated risks are low compared to many common human activities.” To give context, their website states that the cancer risk of breathing California air (in 2000) due to diesel particles was 540 in one million.
- Synthetic turf is not a source of MRSA. OEHHA stated that “It seems unlikely that the new generation of artificial turf is itself a source of MRSA, since MRSA has not been detected in any artificial turf field.” That conclusion is consistent with the findings of the Penn State January 2009 study conducted on the lifespan of staph on grass and synthetic turf, which was sponsored by the STC and the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council.

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If you are interested in the report summary or the full OEHHA report, visit -
<http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Tires/Products/BizAssist/Health/TurfStudy/LitReview.htm>.

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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