



## Does Artificial Turf Belong on the Playground or in Your Stadium?

- Fields with artificial turf are surfaced with material that is often made from recycled rubber tires.
- Artificial turf is widely used as a soil additive or ground cover in athletic fields, running tracks, playgrounds, and other commercial and residential facilities.
- **Artificial turf is known to release many toxic and harmful substances** that may negatively affect both short-term and long-term health.
- Turf fields can rise to temperatures above 100°F. This artificially intensified heat can cause students discomfort, dehydration, and heat stress.
- **Turf chemicals may also become more volatile, and therefore more toxic, in periods of higher temperatures.**
- Crumb rubber is loose and often sticks to the skin, shoes, and clothing, and can be inhaled.
- Empire State Consumer Project 2015 Children's Products Safety Report found arsenic, cadmium, and zinc at "higher than current acceptable limits" in turf.

### What You Can Do:

- Learn more about the mechanics and potential consequences of rubber turf and gather support from the local community.
- Skin cuts and abrasions from turf fields are susceptible to infection. Be sure to clean, monitor and bandage any "turf burns".
- Have students shower and wash thoroughly after playing on an artificial turf field.

**Schools:** If considering a synthetic turf field, practice the precautionary principle, which states that "When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically." More research is needed to determine that synthetic turfs are safe playing surfaces. Until that research is concluded, opt for a natural grass field.

### A Look Inside Artificial Turf

*Although experimental data is limited, artificial turf contains a variety of substances with concerning health effects, such as:*

- Toxic heavy metals like lead, arsenic, cadmium, and chromium
- Potential carcinogens such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
- Latex and other rubbers, which can provoke allergic reactions
- Phthalates, which are known endocrine/hormone disrupters

*In November 2015, the EPA called for more comprehensive efforts to identify potential exposures to tire crumbs and better assess risks:*

<http://www.epa.gov/chemical-research/use-recycled-tire-materials-playgrounds-artificial-turf-fields>



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