

This email is being sent to all of our partners and associates as a follow-up to our earlier correspondence related to the closure of three synthetic turf fields in New Jersey due to elevated lead levels. We have been in close contact with the Synthetic Turf Council, the industry's national trade organization, as it gathers additional information on the issue and will take every opportunity to share the updates with you.

The Synthetic Turf Council continues to emphatically state that synthetic turf is safe for people of all ages, noting that for 40 years under strict EPA oversight and OSHA-regulated manufacturing, not one person has ever reported ill effects related to any of the finished materials used in synthetic turf.

In New Jersey, the concern started with an old synthetic turf field in Newark located in an industrial section known as Ironbound. The field is bordered on three sides by an abandoned industrial complex of the former Tidewater Bailing Company, a facility that reclaimed and recycled various types of scrap metals. The EPA found the Tidewater property was contaminated with heavy metals. The contamination also was found in an adjacent natural grass field, after which the EPA tested the synthetic field and detected levels of lead chromate. As indicated in the NJDHSS release that we attached to our earlier email, the ten fields with polyethylene fiber (fiber similar to what was used in your field) had very low or undetectable levels of lead, while the fields with a different fiber type had high levels – up to 4,100mg/kg.

The state then compared these findings to the soil threshold for lead cleanup and that's where we have the confusion. Since the cleanup standard for lead in the soil is 400 mg/kg, they concluded the fiber containing lead chromate was 10 times that threshold, sounding the cause for alarm. However, New Jersey's test is inappropriate because it's not an apples to apples comparison. The soil threshold for lead does not apply to lead chromate in synthetic turf, which is encapsulated in plastic to prevent it from being absorbed by the body, or migrating into the environment.

Science substantiates these findings. Two independent labs using EPA-approved protocol tested the ability of lead chromate to be released into the air or the environment. Both tests concluded that the lead chromate was contained within its plastic shell. Concerning the question whether lead chromate in synthetic turf presents a risk to humans who play on it, Dr. David Black, a toxicologist at Aegis Sciences Corporation, and Dr. Davis Lee, a chemist from the Georgia Institute of Technology, issued this joint statement on April 21, "There is no scientific evidence of a health risk for children or adults based on recent test results and current knowledge of the chemical structure of aged synthetic turf products." Even the New Jersey DHSS report itself acknowledges, "Available evidence suggests that there are no acute health risks due to use of artificial turf fields, and risks due to chronic and repeated exposure are unlikely."

Finally, we feel it's important to put this into context. Trace amounts of lead are all around us, in everyday household products. What's important is ensuring that quantities of lead that might be harmful to health cannot be absorbed into the body. Lead chromate is overseen by the EPA and regulated by OSHA. It is encapsulated in turf fibers that tests confirm prevent its release into the human body and the environment.

The Synthetic Turf Council is closely monitoring this situation and consulting with some of the nation's recognized experts to ensure the public gets the full story. We will continue to keep you posted as information becomes available. Please feel free to call either Joe or me if you have further questions.

Mark

Mark Heinlein

Senior Vice President

The Motz Group™
Innovators in High Performance Turf



The Motz Group

3607 Church St #300

Cincinnati, OH 45244

(513) 533-6452 t

(513) 678-6709 c

(513) 871-5889 f

mheinlein@themotzgroup.com

www.themotzgroup.com

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