

Michael's Ave Reserve – Installation of an Artificial Turf Field.

1. How long will the project take and what is the expected completion date?
 - A. We expect the field to open for play in March 2013.

2. What is the toxicity of the crumbed rubber to children?
 - A. In July 2010, the Connecticut Department of Public Health announced a new study of the risks to children and adults playing on synthetic turf fields containing crumb rubber infill. The results confirmed that there are “no elevated health risks.”

A December 2009 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency scoping study of the health risks from inhalation, ingestion, and dermal contact with synthetic turf and crumb rubber found every test result to be “below levels of concern.”

The California EPA released a report in July 2009 indicating a negligible human health risk from inhaling the air above synthetic turf.

Independent tests conducted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York State Department of Health, released in May 2009, proved no significant health concerns at synthetic turf fields.

In July 2008, a US Consumer Product Safety Commission staff report approved the use of synthetic turf by children and people of all ages.

3. There is an urban Wetland Restoration project underway in the park. What will the Council be doing to mitigate the toxic effects that spraying chemicals will have on the birds and native wildlife who inhabit the reserve?
 - A. As stated elsewhere, we propose to use only environmentally friendly organic products in the maintenance of the field. These products will be applied at the very low frequency, *i.e.* about once or twice per year. The storm water run-off from the field does not go into the pond/wetland to the north of the field. For the above reasons we do not believe that the presence of the artificial field will have any detrimental effect on the pond/wetland.

4. What provisions has the council put in place to mitigate destruction of soil biodiversity under the field?
 - A. The construction of the artificial field will bring total site coverage to about 25% of the park area. This is well below the normal coverage permitted on residential and school sites, and means that the majority of the area of the park will continue to function with full soil biodiversity.

5. Has the Council seen studies such as: Potential Water Issues Regarding Artificial Turf Water Resources Division Director, Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Services, March 2011, or this study for instance: An Assessment Of Chemical Leaching, Releases To Air And Temperature At Crumb-Rubber Infilled Synthetic Turf Fields, May 2009, New York State Dept. of Health and Dept of Env. Conservation.
 - A. We are aware of the considerable body of information available about the environmental impacts of artificial fields. Since 3G surfaces were developed in the late 1990's, approximately 3000 3G sports fields have been installed in Europe and approximately 1000 in North America. Over the next two years, the number of 3G fields is projected to increase by about 30% in Europe and about 50% in North America.

A significant amount of research has been carried out on the environmental effects of these fields. Whilst there are still gaps in the research, there is a wealth of evidence from reputable and independent sources indicating that synthetic surfaces to be safe for the environment.

6. Why was this project a non-notified consent?
A. The independent commissioner who handled the application, made the decision to process the consent as non-notified. The fact that the project is simply implementing a landscape master plan that was adopted after widespread public consultation, is likely to have been a significant consideration.
7. Our soccer team has asked what kind of access they will get to the turf and whether they will have to join the local soccer club to play on it.
A. No, it will not be necessary to join the soccer club. The field will be available for the school to use during school hours by booking through the Local and Sports Parks Booking Co-ordinator (phone 365 3109). There is no fee for school use on weekdays.
8. What will happen to the health of people using the turf if the turf is not treated with the recommended sprays?
A. Bacteria may build up in the surface layer with the attendant risk of infection and sickness for players.
9. What will happen if there is no alternate weed management system suitable to use on the turf?
A. We do not believe this will arise.
10. Why has building of the turf gone ahead when it has not been established whether it can be maintained without contravening the spray ban?
A. We believe that the use of environmentally friendly organic cleaning agents is not contravening the spray ban.
11. Is the soccer field open to the general public to walk through and use?
A. Yes, provided they do not interfere with booked use. Care needs to be taken not to contaminate the turf with muddy shoes, food or drink, etc. Dogs are not permitted on the field for reasons of hygiene.
12. How big are the fences surrounding the soccer field?
A. A single fence will extend around the perimeter of the field. For most of its length it will be 1.2m high, but behind the two goal posts it will be higher to prevent balls being kicked out of the field.
13. Why has the general public not been consulted about the potential use of sprays on the turf prior to construction starting?
A. We do not normally consult the public over minor cleaning and hygiene processes. However, we did make an offer to consult with the school prior to applying any cleaning and hygiene products. This offer still stands.
14. Is there any other turf like this installed in New Zealand or overseas that has been maintained without toxic sprays?
A. Because of the availability of suitable environmentally friendly organic cleaning products, we assume that there is. However, at this stage we have not identified a specific example.
15. Where does the storm water for the area go?
A. Into the large storm water drainage pipe that run under Michael's Ave.