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SAFETY ALERT

No. 14-06

SAFETY OF ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELDS

December 2014

In 2008, the District conducted lead testing of artificial turfs in response to a Centers for Disease Control advisory regarding lead content of the turf blades and rubber in-fill material known as crumb rubber. In consultation with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH), the District removed the artificial turfs from Early Education Centers in an abundance of caution. The District also removed recycled crumb rubber from design specifications in 2009 and replaced it with in-fill material from non-recycled sources. Recent news reports have focused additional attention on health and safety concerns related to artificial turf fields and crumb rubber, although no specific health-based directives have been issued. We are following LACDPH's recent findings that no warnings or restrictions for the use of fields with crumb rubber are required at this time.

One safety concern that can be readily addressed is radiant heat associated with artificial turfs. Artificial turf surfaces can have temperatures higher than natural grass fields, increasing the risk of heat-related illness and burns. During hot weather, activities on artificial turfs, asphalt playgrounds, or in general may be limited or cancelled based on the site administrator's judgment.

Scheduling morning or evening sport practices instead of midday during hot weather can help reduce heat-related illness for our students. For general information on preventing heat related illness, refer to [Safety Alert No. 11-05, Preventing Heat-Related Illness](#). Additionally, irrigation can help reduce surface temperatures on artificial field turfs and should be used in accordance with the manufacturer guidelines.

For questions regarding the safety of artificial turf fields please contact OEHS at (213) 241-3199 or at <http://achieve.lausd.net/OEHS>.



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