

ISRI Artificial Turf and Rubber Infill Position Statement¹

Overview

There have been several national and local press reports regarding synthetic turf fields that utilize crumb rubber infill material highlighting a concern that these fields expose players to constituents that may be harmful to human health for certain demographics.

This infill material has been widely used in thousands of playing fields throughout the United States. Currently, the ninety peer-reviewed studies that have been conducted overwhelmingly suggest that crumb rubber synthetic turf poses no significant health risk. However, policymakers, athletes and parents continue to express concerns about the use of this material. Some states and localities have discontinued the use of synthetic turf without, apparently, first examining or considering the existing scientific evidence. To address their concerns, additional scientific information has been requested to ensure these synthetic playing fields pose no significant risks.

Crumb rubber is derived from recycling used tires. In the United States, more than 1.2 billion pounds of crumb rubber are recycled annually and are used in a variety of new products, including infill in synthetic turfs. Tire recycling is both an economically-sound and environmentally-friendly activity that helps lower the overall carbon footprint of tires, creates jobs, and produces useful products. Additionally, crumb rubber infill material can reduce injuries by providing a cushion to an otherwise hard ground surface. Using crumb rubber infill is also cost-effective for maintaining athletic fields by saving water.

It is the position of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (ISRI) that:

- Educating policymakers, regulators, other decision makers, parents and the general public about the positive economic and environmental benefits of rubber recycling.
- Cautioning policymakers, regulators, other decision makers, parents and the general public against prematurely deciding not to use crumb rubber infill without first reviewing and considering the existing scientific evidence.
- Working to ensure that scientific studies into the use of crumb rubber fill material in synthetic turfs are independent and peer reviewed.

¹ As Adopted by the ISRI Board of Directors on January 21, 2016