



## Artificial Turf Assessment and Remediation

*Excerpted from Minutes 2019-09-16*

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MOVED by Commissioner Irwin  
SECONDED by Commissioner Giesbrecht

*Amendments (substation for A)* MOVED by Commissioner Demers

*Final motion as amended:*

### WHEREAS:

1. The Chief Medical Health Officer for Vancouver has provided a letter outlining the most up-to-date public health recommendations regarding synthetic turf fields (included as Appendix A in the October 2017 Synthetic Turf Playing Fields report);
2. A group of concerned citizens has found that crumb rubber pellets, at both Trillium Park and Van Tech artificial turf playing fields tested positive for lead (15.9 micrograms per gram at Trillium);
3. The crumb rubber infill from VanTech, the oldest public synthetic turf playing field in Vancouver, was analyzed at Element Lab in Surrey, and reportedly measured 12 micrograms of lead, and the plastic turf blades measured even higher for lead at 24.3 micrograms per gram;
4. The lab report they provided states that “[w]hen lead-containing coatings are disturbed... or otherwise abraded, lead dust, mist or fumes can be released into the... environment and be inhaled or ingested...”;
5. Dr. Bruce Lanphear, a professor at SFU Health Sciences and clinician scientist at BC Children’s Hospital Research Institute, notes that “children are exposed to lead and other toxic chemicals in the rubber and plastic materials in artificial turf”;
6. Dr. Lanphear’s research on the impacts of lead on children’s health led the World Health Organization and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to declare “There is no safe level of lead in children’s blood”;
7. Dr. Lanphear states that despite 17% of the chemicals in crumb rubber being classified as carcinogens by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), “there are no long-term studies to quantify the extent of children’s exposure to lead and other toxic chemicals found in synthetic turf playing fields”;
8. This summer, the California EPA is due to release results from a study of the chemicals in crumb rubber infill and the plastic turf and backing that will provide exposure information and a health impacts assessment;
9. During field visits to Trillium Park in April, crumb rubber material was observed spreading out onto nearby soils and down storm drains;
10. Park Board staff are setting-up a synthetic playing field advisory group to consider service levels, sustainability goals, and technical analysis, which will support the



broader public engagement process for siting new synthetic turf facilities in Vancouver parks;

11. Park Board staff will work with the synthetic playing field advisory group, residents, and the Vancouver Field Sport Federation to develop concepts and recommendations for new synthetic turf playing field sites.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to provide the most recent scientific findings, which would include the results of the California Environmental Protection Agency study (Part 1) once released, when responding to the Board Enquiry titled "Synthetic Turf on Sports Fields" that was submitted on the May 27, 2019; and

FURTHER THAT staff work with environmental and health consultants to review the implications of said scientific findings;

- B. THAT the Vancouver Park Board directs staff to clean and remediate any artificial turf areas where crumb rubber is dispersing into either soils or stormwater systems;
- C. THAT the Vancouver Park Board explores stormwater catchment systems that will prevent existing crumb rubber and microplastics from entering aquatic ecosystems, and applies any possible learnings to current artificial turf areas and future installations of artificial turf.

REFERRED

(Commissioners Demers and Irwin opposed)

*Note: The motion was referred to staff to be included in the report expected on this topic in 2020 in response to a Board enquiry.*