

## **Artificial Turf Moratorium - Teter Report did not allay concerns about artificial turf**

David Teter Consulting was asked to provide the Town of Sharon a risk assessment as to the hazards of artificial turf to human health and aquatic habitats. This report was requested in large part because of the reports by PEER and The Ecology Center in October 2019, that artificial turf contains PFAS.

David Teter coordinated the testing of 3 artificial turf samples: Two FieldTurf plastic carpets and one SprintTurf plastic carpet. It is anticipated that these particular manufacturers were chosen because both have communicated that they do not use PFAS in the production of their plastic grass carpets.

Based on the testing, David Teter concludes in his report:

“It is the Consultant’s opinion that the installation of any of the three proposed synthetic turf carpets combined with the use of BrockFill infill and a Brock shock pad will not pose an elevated risk to either aquatic habitat or human health.”

However, several unresolved controversies remain.

- 1) David Teter reported that 29 older PFAS chemicals, representing less than 1% of the potential compounds, were not found at detectable levels in the carpet. This analysis provides no reassurance that PFAS is not present. The problem is that chemists have synthesized more than 4,700 proprietary PFAS chemicals, and only 36 of these can be measured by specific and sensitive tests.
- 2) David Teter did not measure total fluorine levels, an indicator of the likely presence of PFAS, including fluoropolymers. Notably an internal SprintTurf document obtained through the Freedom of Information Act documents the presence of fluorine in SprintTurf plastic blades at a level of 430 ppm, similar to the fluorine levels in turf reported by PEER and the Ecology Center, indicating the presence of PFAS of fluoropolymers.
- 3) David Teter indicated in his presentation to the Standing Building Committee (SBC) on Jan 21 that Shaw Industries uses a fluoropolymer PVDF as an extrusion aid in producing their plastic grass. He indicated that PVDF is inert and non-toxic. He also indicated that Teflon, another fluoropolymer, is inert and non-toxic. His position is at odds with the opinion of many environmental scientists and groups given that Teflon is known to degrade to toxic fluorine-containing small molecules at high temperature.
- 4) One of the FieldTurf samples tested gave a value of a fertility-disrupting phthalate, DEHP, that was above the drinking water standard for this chemical. He explained this finding as a bad “biased-high” chromatogram rather than doing the scientifically sound thing: retest the sample.
- 5) David Teter did not measure the levels of polybrominated chemicals that are typically used as flame retardants. This is an unacceptable omission given that recent evidence suggests that these compounds are among the strongest contributors to IQ loss and intellectual disability in children.
- 6) Sports Turf Specialities, Inc., Wrentham, MA evaluated the cost of upgrading 15 Town of Sharon natural grass athletic fields in 2016. That estimate, \$0.94 million, is less

than the \$1.1 million estimated cost of a single artificial turf field installation at SHS, and that field would have an expected lifespan of only 8 years.

7) The Mass. School Building Authority will potential reimburse the installation of a natural grass athletic field, as part of the new SHS project, up to 8%. Installation of a synthetic turf field is not reimbursable.

8) David Teter acknowledged at the SBC Jan 21 meeting that installation of an artificial turf field at SHS is not without risk. He suggested testing of the water draining from the field, after its installation, and again at a later date. IT WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO FIND OUT THERE IS A PROBLEM AFTER SPENDING \$1.1 MILLION TO INSTALL AN ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELD.