



# ASCIP *RISK ALERT!*

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**Date:** June 5, 2008

**Attention:** ASCIP Members

**Subject:** Potential Lead Hazards in Synthetic Turf

In view of the recent media attention given to the incidents of lead contamination being found in two New Jersey synthetic athletic playing fields, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has begun investigating lead hazards as they relate to synthetic turf. State lawmakers and athletic organizations are calling for safer synthetic turfs and legislation that addresses the manufacturing and installation of such surfaces.

Lead is a toxic substance that, if ingested or inhaled, may result in a wide range of adverse health effects and was used in older plumbing materials and water services lines. Both children and adults can suffer health effects from Lead ingestion or inhalation. Lead in varying concentrations continues to be detected in other products; however, the simple presence of small amounts of Lead may not always indicate that a hazard is present. The most common of these health effects in small children are learning difficulties, behavioral problems and hearing difficulties.

Reportedly, the most common exposure to synthetic turf users is the inhalation or ingestion of lead contaminated dust that may be generated from lead-containing synthetic turfs. Lead may have been used in such products as a stabilizing agent and to prevent color fade. Exposure to sunlight and environmental elements may cause the Lead content within such synthetic materials to oxidize and accumulate on the exterior surfaces where exposure could occur. Such oxidation may or may not be visible.

Because it is generally not possible for a user to determine if a synthetic turf contains Lead or if that Lead content has oxidized and represents a potential exposure hazard, users of synthetic turf fields should consider following simple safety precautions after each use. Users should always wash their hands before eating or drinking while at the field or event. After each use or event launder clothing that was used on synthetic turf and wash hands and bodies with soap and water.

At this time ASCIP is monitoring the progress of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's investigation on lead hazards in synthetic turf. Members who are concerned that their synthetic turf fields may contain lead are encouraged to contact ASCIP's Certified Industrial Hygienist to discuss testing methodologies. ASCIP staff is available to assist in addressing potential Lead exposure concerns as they may arise.

## **Related Risk Alerts:**

[Lead Hazards in Drinking Water](#)  
[Lead Hazards in Toys and Lunchboxes](#)  
[Lead Hazards in Children's Books](#)