

## December 18-January 6 Committee Homework

One of our tasks is to recommend the type of infill material to be used for our new synthetic turf fields. As you might know, concerns have been raised about the components of crumb rubber and using it as infill material. A recent ESPN commentary provides a framework for the issue: <http://espn.go.com/espnw/news-commentary/article/14206717/how-safe-fields-where-play>

At our January 6, 2016 meeting Dr. Greg Stern from the Whatcom County Health Department will be with us to provide information on crumb rubber used as infill in artificial turf and discuss this topic with us. From Dr. Stern:

*There is ongoing research, as well as review of the evidence and periodic reports on safety of the material. I have looked into the recommendations of the federal EPA and Washington State Department of Health, and they haven't found a specific risk on reviewing available evidence so far, but some health questions haven't yet been addressed in research.*

*The EPA stated this year "Current information from a number of tire crumb studies does not show an elevated health risk from playing on fields with synthetic turf or tire crumbs. However, these studies do not comprehensively address new questions and concerns about children's health risks from exposure to crumb rubber." <http://www.epa.gov/chemical-research/use-recycled-tire-materials-playgrounds-artificial-turf-fields>*

WA DOH addresses the question: *Should communities install crumb rubber fields?*

*"It is important for Washington communities to build and support environments that make it easier for adults and youth to be physically active. Physical activity can slow the increase in the proportion of adults who are obese, reduce rates of chronic disease, and improve the quality of life. The currently available research does not suggest that crumb rubber presents a significant public health risk. The Washington State Department of Health will continue to monitor new research on health and environmental impacts."*

[<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/EnvironmentalHealth/syntheticTurf>]

DOH and EPA provide lists of other relevant studies.

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/EnvironmentalHealth/SyntheticTurf/StudiesCrumbRubber>

<http://www.epa.gov/chemical-research/tire-crumb-and-synthetic-turf-field-literature-and-report-list-nov-2015>

I am looking forward to meeting with the High School Turf Fields Advisory Group on January 6.

*I ask that committee members review the one page DOH Q&A*

*at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/EnvironmentalHealth/SyntheticTurf>, and the EPA page, *The Use of Recycled Tire Materials on Playgrounds & Artificial Turf Fields*,*

*at <http://www.epa.gov/chemical-research/use-recycled-tire-materials-playgrounds-artificial-turf-fields>. Both pages have links for further information if members want to explore them further before our meeting. I would appreciate having members email questions to me before the meeting so I can better prepare for it and best use our time then.*

Email your questions to Ron at: [Ron.Cowan@bellingshamschools.org](mailto:Ron.Cowan@bellingshamschools.org) and I will forward them to Dr. Stern.

Thank you!

Ron and Steve