



Virginia Green Industry Council

For Immediate Use

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Electronic Version:
www.viriniagreen.org

Heat Potential of Artificial Turf Poses Increased Health Risk

High temperatures, strenuous athletic activities and artificial turfgrass can be a serious, perhaps even fatal combination according to officials at the Turf Resource Center (TRC).

Doug Fender, TRC executive director, warns parents of young and even experienced athletes, "as we tragically saw last year with both professional and college football players working out on a hot day, the desire to prove athletic abilities can overcome our natural instincts and we push ourselves when we should be resting and re-hydrating. Temperatures on artificial turf fields can be much higher than the surrounding air temperatures and the combination of strenuous exercise and lack of proper hydration can be serious. If the athlete has a significant medical condition such as asthma, it could become fatal."

Citing a classic scientific study conducted at Texas A&M University as far back as 1985, Fender said, "properly maintained Bermuda grass was measured at 88° F, while synthetic turf in the same area was 158° F. That's a 70° difference, nearly 80 percent hotter, between these two types of playing surfaces."

"I'm neither a doctor nor a coach," Fender said, "but I am a parent and a grandparent, so I feel an obligation to keep an eye on this type of situation and insist that practices not be conducted on an artificial field on hot days. Regardless of the type of field or temperature, athletes should be provided adequate fluids and encouraged to take proper breaks to keep from over-heating and potentially encountering very serious health problems.

Go to our consumer website for additional gardening information at www.VirginiaGardening.com

The Virginia Green Industry Council is the voice of the horticulture industry in the Commonwealth and is dedicated to enhancing the beauty of the state's environment, the well-being of our citizens, improving our state's economy, and improving the health and wellness for everyone in Virginia. The Council is made up of providers and consumers of horticultural products and services. The Council works to provide public and industry education, environmental guidelines and other information that will keep Virginia green and growing. For more information, visit www.viriniagreen.org. 540-382-0943 FAX: 540-382-2716

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