

## City sues over turf field



The city of Coquitlam is suing companies that supplied the artificial turf at Percy Perry field, alleging poor drainage problems.

*Craig Hodge/the tri-city news*

By [Gary McKenna - The Tri-City News](#)

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The city of Coquitlam has launched a civil suit against nearly a dozen companies involved in the construction of a \$2 million artificial turf field at Percy Perry Stadium.

In court documents, first filed in 2009, the city alleges that faulty design, construction and installation is to blame for the field's drainage problems, which create ponds of water on top of the 11,000-square-metre turf.

"As a result of these and any other defects, the project has failed to perform as promised or expected and the defects are such that they pose a substantial danger to users of the artificial sports field," the city said in its statement of claim.

The companies involved in the construction of the field, the city alleges, misrepresented the quality and performance of the turf and drainage system.

Coquitlam Mayor Richard Stewart said he has witnessed games where a soccer ball is kicked high through the air only to stop dead when it hits the wet ground.

He added that while the city is open to an out-of-court alternative solution, taxpayers should not be on the hook for the field's drainage problems.

"There is no question that the city is blameless in the poor performance of the field," he said. "Taxpayers will not be covering the costs associated."

The city is seeking damages associated with repairing the defects and costs involved with testing the field to figure out why it was not draining properly. Increased maintenance costs are also outlined in the damages as well as the loss of use of the field, which means a loss of revenue for the city.

Problems with the field became apparent to city officials in December 2006 as construction neared completion, said the statement of claim. Almost a year earlier the city issued a request for proposals for consulting services for the design and planning of the field, which was granted to Athletica Sport and Recreation Design. The company, which subcontracted some of the work to engineering firm Stantec Consulting and geotechnical engineers Levelton Engineering, recommended what is called a drainage/shock pad field base system, according to the city.

With the information provided by Athletica, the city alleges that another request for proposals was issued in July 2006 for the installation of the field. A proposal from Fieldturf Inc., a company that worked in conjunction with FieldTurf West Distributors, FieldTurf USA and FieldTurf Tarkett, was accepted, said the statement of claim.

Wilco Landscapers and Contractors provided the equipment, labour and materials for the installation of the field and Brock International was contracted to provide the drainage system, which is known as the Brockpad, the city alleges.

All of the companies involved in the planning, design and construction of the field have been named in the city's lawsuit. None of what the city alleges in its filing has been proven in court.

In separate statements of defence all of the companies deny the allegations made in the city's statement of claim and said proper building and design practices were used.

The field at Percy Perry was part of a series of upgrades, which added two synthetic turf fields, a baseball diamond and new parking facilities to Town Centre Park. The \$10-million project was completed in 2009.

Stewart said the other fields built after the Percy Perry turf was completed used different drainage technology and have not had any problems.

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