



Just In...

**Trump's DHS nominee:
No need for full border
wall**

ADMINISTRATION — 9M 1S AGO

**FEMA finalizing plans to
airlift Puerto Ricans to
Florida and New York:
report**

ADMINISTRATION — 20M 33S AGO

**Civil rights group urges
Senate to reject
Alabama district court
nominee**

ADMINISTRATION — 21M 4S AGO

**GOP feels pressure to
deliver after election
rout**

SENATE — 25M 21S AGO

**Veterans deserve civil
rights protections too**

OPINION — 31M 58S AGO

**House Judiciary
advances warrantless
wiretapping reform bill**

NATIONAL SECURITY

— 35M 19S AGO

**Dem, GOP strategists
debate what 2017
elections mean for next
year**

IN THE NEWS — 35M 57S AGO

**Justice, AT&T trade
accusations over CNN
sale**

TECHNOLOGY — 39M 16S AGO

[VIEW ALL](#)

How the synthetic turf industry bypassing children's safety

BY NANCY ALDERMAN, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR - 06/26/17 05:00 PM EDT

124 SHARES



SHARE



TWEET



© Getty Images

Shredded tires were sold as materials to surface our youngest children's playgrounds and to infill synthetic turf fields before any testing was done to see if the material was safe for such uses. Now the government is looking to thoroughly find the answer to ensure American kids are not at risk during recess.

A synthetic turf study undertaken in 2016 by four United States agencies — EPA, Consumer Products Safety Commission, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry — is incredibly important for the health and safety of a whole generation of children who are being exposed to synthetic turf fields infilled with waste tire-crumb rubber.

As many scientists and physicians became concerned about these new uses for waste tires, some independent testing began. These independent studies looked at what chemicals were in the tires, how much the chemicals out-gassed, how children were actually exposed and what happened as the fields heated up in the warmer months.

A study done at Yale University found 96 chemicals in the waste tire materials. Of those, only half had any federal testing done on them and, of the half that had been tested, 11 of those chemicals were carcinogenic and 20 were skin, eye and respiratory irritants.

Some independent studies looked at the heat effects of synthetic turf. The University of Arkansas found that when the outside air was 98 degrees, the air just above synthetic turf fields was anywhere from 173 to as high as 199 degrees. In New York it was found that when the outside air was 89 degrees, synthetic turf fields ranged from 145 to 160 degrees. The Toronto Department of Public Health found that synthetic turf fields became hotter than asphalt in the sun.

Related News by



Michelle Obama: We raise men to feel...



Video captured Texas gunman shooting...

Jimmy Carter: Trump is leading health care



Trump Jr. jokes he'll take half of daughter's...

What does this extreme heat do to the chemicals in waste tire materials? The extreme heat causes the carcinogens and irritants in the material to be far more available for human uptake and exposures — the fields and playgrounds with shredded waste tires become even more dangerous.

The [turf industry](#) [complained in a recent column](#) that the federal study investigating these dangers is taking too long. This is a complicated study and the research must be conducted in a thorough manner. It is crucial for this research to be done correctly, as there is a whole generation of children being exposed to this material and many of them are exposed starting as toddlers on their playgrounds.

Industry has always claimed they have studies that prove their synthetic fields are safe. If no one actually reads the studies, then there is no one to dispute those claims. Environment and Human Health, Inc. has spent the past year reading these studies and summarizing their findings. So far, we have not found these studies to prove the fields are safe, and in fact, many of the researchers have asked that additional testing be done, which is exactly what the government is now doing.

Industry representatives insist, "there are many better uses of taxpayer dollars and the agency's time." We say there is NO better use of the federal government's time or of our tax dollars than to complete this testing — our children's health depends on it.

Nancy Alderman is president of environmental advocacy organization Environment and Human Health, Inc.

The views expressed by contributors are their own and are not the views of The Hill.

TAGS NANCY ALDERMAN ENVIRONMENT TURF EPA TIRES CRUMB RUBBER
COMMODITY CHEMICALS WASTE TIRES ARTIFICIAL TURF ELECTRONIC WASTE RUBBER
MANUFACTURING

