



Synthetic Turf Installed in North America Conserves More Than Three Billion Gallons of Water, Eliminates Nearly a Billion Pounds of Pesticides and Fertilizers and Has Recycled Over 105 Million Tires

## Numerous Eco-friendly benefits of artificial grass empower users to reduce our carbon footprint

ATLANTA, Feb. 1, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- While millions of people, businesses, schools and homeowners use synthetic turf for landscape and play, one of its major beneficiaries is the environment. As of 2011, the estimated total amount of synthetic turf installed in North America annually conserves more than three billion gallons of water, significantly reduces smog emissions and eliminates close to a billion pounds of harmful fertilizers and pesticides. The industry has also recycled more than 105 million used tires.

"Synthetic turf has made a very positive impact on the environment," said Rick Doyle, President of the [Synthetic Turf Council](#). "The synthetic turf industry continues to innovate to enhance synthetic turf's numerous eco-friendly benefits that empower users to reduce their carbon footprint."

### Significant Environmental Impact

**Conserves over three billion gallons of water.** Water is one of our most precious resources. More than 6,000 synthetic turf fields are currently being used in the United States, with each full-sized field saving between 500,000 to 1,000,000 gallons plus of water each year. During 2010, that meant at least three billion gallons of water, and perhaps as much as six billion or more, was saved through the use of synthetic turf fields.

**Eliminates the need to water lawns.** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), over one-third of residential water is used for lawn irrigation nationwide, totaling more than 4 billion gallons of water a day. The Southern Nevada Water Authority also estimates that every square foot of grass replaced with synthetic turf saves an additional 55 gallons of water per year. Therefore, an average lawn of 1,800 square feet will save 99,000 gallons of water a year if landscaped with synthetic turf – about 70% of a homeowner's water bill, or up to \$500.

**Eradicates the use of almost a billion pounds of pesticides and fertilizers.** The EPA has identified runoff of toxic pesticides and fertilizers as a principal cause of water pollution. In Florida alone, the EPA estimates that about 1,000 miles of rivers and streams, 350,000 acres of lakes and 900 square miles of estuaries are impaired by runoff of pesticides and fertilizers. Synthetic turf eliminates the need for nearly a billion pounds of harmful pesticides, fertilizers, fungicides and herbicides which are used to maintain grass.

**Keeps more than 105 million used tires out of landfills.** Most of the synthetic turf sports fields and landscape applications in use incorporate crumb rubber infill recycled from used tires, keeping more than 105 million used tires out of landfills.

**Depending on field usage, synthetic turf can lower consumption of energy, raw materials and solid waste generation.** BASF Corporation performed an [Eco-Efficiency Analysis](#) measuring environmental and economical impacts of synthetic turf athletic fields with professionally installed

and maintained grass alternatives. According to BASF, among the major findings of the study was that the average life cycle costs over 20 years of a natural grass field are 15 percent higher than the synthetic turf alternatives, even when factoring in a replacement synthetic turf field during that time. Released in November 2010, the life cycle assessment found that with typical field usage, synthetic turf had a lower consumption of energy, raw materials and solid waste generation than natural grass fields. BASF's eco-efficiency analysis is an award-winning and strategic tool, based on the ISO 14040 standard for lifecycle analysis, which quantifies the sustainability of products or processes.

**Prevents smog and noxious emissions.** According to the EPA, lawn mowers are a significant source of pollution that impairs lung function, inhibits plant growth, and is a key ingredient of smog. A gas-powered push mower emits as much hourly pollution as 11 cars, and a riding mower emits as much as 34 cars. In addition, the EPA estimates that over 17 million gallons of gas and oil are spilled each year from refueling lawn equipment; that is more oil than was spilled by the Exxon Valdez.

**Reduces grass clippings.** The EPA estimated in 2002 that 12% of what goes into landfills is yard waste. During the summer months, clippings can account for nearly half of a community's waste. Switching to synthetic turf reduces this significant source of environmental pollution.

Schools, parks, businesses, municipalities, homeowners, golf courses and others using synthetic turf can receive Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (**LEED**) credits for Water Efficient Landscaping, Stormwater Design, Recycled Content and Rapidly Renewable Materials from the **U.S. Green Building Council**. Many synthetic turf companies have also created products that are 100% recyclable. 'Green' options also exist for recycling, reusing and disposing of infill and the synthetic turf itself. The industry is working hard to develop further eco-friendly end-of-life disposal solutions.

#### [About the Synthetic Turf Council](#)

Based in Atlanta, the Synthetic Turf Council was founded in 2003 to promote the industry and to assist buyers and end users with the selection, use and maintenance of synthetic turf systems in sports field, golf, municipal parks, airports, landscape and residential applications. The organization is also a resource for current, credible, and independent research on the safety and environmental impact of synthetic turf. Membership includes builders, landscape architects, testing labs, maintenance providers, manufacturers, suppliers, installation contractors, infill material suppliers and other specialty service companies. For more information, visit [www.syntheticurfCouncil.org](http://www.syntheticurfCouncil.org).

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