

# Fwd: Dear MV Commission, Plastic Grass

Adam Turner

Thu 2/4/2021 6:45 AM

To: Alex Elvin <elvin@mvcommission.org>;

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Pamela Benjamin <psb@senseofwondercreations.org>  
**Date:** February 4, 2021 at 2:29:48 AM EST  
**To:** Adam Turner <turner@mvcommission.org>  
**Subject:** Dear MV Commission, Plastic Grass

Dear Martha's Vineyard Commission,

I hope that you and your families are all healthy, happy and safe. I am writing to you today because our family is enormously concerned about the possibility of having plastic grass or chemical grass, AKA artificial turf on the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School fields. Just the knowledge that there are all those PFAS chemicals in plastic grass is bone chilling and worrisome, and this does not include the toxic chemicals that will be used to clean the plastic and the pesticides and chemical weed killers that eliminate the plants that grow through it... according to articles that I have read. (see below) We have three grandsons in the high school at the moment who love and play sports. Our whole family is very concerned about this prospect. It goes against every environmental and ecologically conscious concept and also everything that our beautiful island of Martha's Vineyard stands for. We are extremely upset about the possibility of our grandsons playing on those toxic fields and also every other MVRHS student who will be using those playing fields. There have also been studies that find that there are more injuries on artificial turf than on well-maintained grass fields. I played sports when I was in High School and was thrilled to be out of the institutional school building, running on, sitting on, touching, smelling and feeling the live blades of grass under my feet. It was a very enriching, poignant and healing experience that I hope will always be offered to our MVRHS students.

I hope that all this information I am including in this message (below) and more is getting to the Commission members. The articles are very easy to access on line. Please make sure you are choosing articles that are published by highly rated and trusted environmental organizations and medical experts. Thank you all so much for your service to our community and all that you do. We are confident that you have our best interests and the interests of the health and wellbeing of our beautiful island in mind.

Thank you so much for reading this letter.

Wishing you all the best, Pam Stevens Benjamin, Director of Sense  
of Wonder Creations Inc

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/aug/02/turf-it-out-is-it-time-to-say-goodbye-to-artificial-grass>

“If your attention during the Women’s World Cup was on the pitch rather than the players, you might have noticed that the matches were all played on real grass. That was a hard-won change, made after the US team complained to Fifa **that they sustained more injuries on artificial turf.**”

And from *Popular Science* Magazine:

“The study leveraged 10 years of data on college football injuries from the NCAA Injury Surveillance System, which collects information from Division I, II, and III athletic programs. That data set included over 3 million athlete exposures—times when an athlete participated in a practice or game—and 2,460 knee injuries. Playing on turf made an athlete nearly three times more likely to suffer a PCL injury, across all three divisions. Division II and III athletes were around one and a half times more likely to suffer an ACL injury on turf.

<https://www.ewg.org/childrenshealth/22912/new-studies-show-pfas-artificial-grass-blades-and-backing> ( Environmental Working Group EWG)

PEER and the Ecology Center tested eight different samples of turf. They all tested positive for total fluorine, which suggests the presence of PFAS. PFAS are used in the manufacturing process to make the turf blades pliable enough for extrusion. The organizations tested for 36 types of PFAS, but there may be many other PFAS in synthetic grass.

There are between [12,000 and 13,000 artificial fields](#) in use in the U.S. The turf and infill of a single deconstructed field weighs about 44,000 pounds. There are also many fields no longer in active use. Fields need to be replaced every 8 to 10 years, according to the [Synthetic Turf Council](#), with between 1,200 and 1,500 fields being replaced at any given time.

<https://www.ecocenter.org/toxic-forever-chemicals-infest-artificial-turf>

**Washington, DC — The toxic chemicals used in fire retardants and non-stick cookware have been found in artificial turf carpet, according to Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) and The Ecology Center. This raises new public health and environmental concerns, including the potential of these chemicals to leach from turf fields into nearby waters.**

**Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are called “forever chemicals” because they do not break down in the environment and bio-accumulate in the food chain. Human exposures to PFAS are associated with cancer, birth defects, and other impairments.**

**Massachusetts is poised to implement a ground water and drinking water standard of 20 ppt for six PFAS, individually or combined. !!**

**\*\*\* Here is more information about the groundwater standard in Massachusetts.**

<https://www.natlawreview.com/article/massachusetts-finalizes-drinking-water-standard-pfas>

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Sense of Wonder Creations

<http://www.senseofwondercreations.org>

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