

Artificial Turf at The MV Regional High School

Scarlet Johnson <scarlet@scarletyoga.com>

Thu 10/22/2020 9:34 AM

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

Dear Elvin,

I am a year round West Tisbury resident writing to let you know that I am strongly against artificial turf going in at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, chiefly because of the health risks it poses to our island, especially our children.

These fields are made of a toxic petroleum product which one cannot get rid of. The synthetic turf has lead in it. In 2007 California State sued over the presence of lead at up to 5,000 parts per million in the plastic grass sold by three of the biggest companies in the US. The harm of lead is cumulative and permanent. I remember when my child was a baby, a lead test was mandatory. If the Massachusetts health care system is so careful to screen for lead exposure in the youngest members of our community, why would anyone let them play on it as teenagers? It just doesn't make sense. Worse, it isn't ok. Also there are, as you probably know, other toxic elements, including up to 52 known and suspected human carcinogens endocrine disruptors PAHs: toxins that are released over time as the artificial turf breaks down. Athletes are exposed through ingestion inhalation and dermal uptake. This turf creates a toxic cloud that hovers around the people on it.

The location of this synthetic turf field: on top of the island's sole source aquifer, is disastrous for the health of all the people who live and visit here. There is one exception: those who will be able to afford bottled water. Bottled water has its own obvious destructive impact on the environment. To take an action that will have a disproportionate effect on the less fortunate members of our society is unconscionable.

I hope you will do everything in your power to keep the fields green naturally and keep our island and all those who live on it healthy.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,
Scarlet S. Johnson
(she/her)

May all beings everywhere be happy and free.
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