

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

October 23, 2015

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

We are writing to you today out of concern about the safety of recycled rubber tire crumbs used in synthetic turf fields in the United States. On October 8, 2014 NBC News ran a story entitled “How Safe is the Artificial Turf Field Your Child Plays On?”, and on October 1, 2015 NBC News ran another story entitled, “Mom of Goalie Who Died of Cancer Wants Answers on Artificial Turf.” These stories and others raise questions among athletes and parents that crumb rubber on artificial turf athletic fields may present a pathway to exposure to one or more carcinogens.

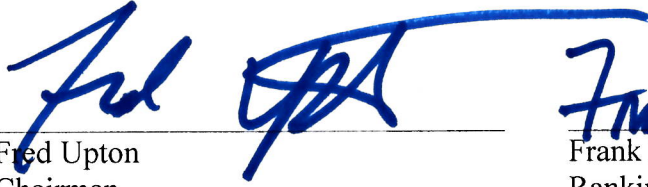
Accordingly, we respectfully request responses to the following questions:

1. In 2009, EPA issued a study entitled “A Scoping-Level Field Monitoring Study of Synthetic Turf Fields and Playgrounds.” The study did not find contaminants being released from the turf above levels of concern but noted that additional study was needed to fully characterize the risks. Has EPA conducted the additional testing needed to fully assess the hazards and exposures associated with crumb rubber on artificial turf athletic fields?
2. Other federal agencies, such as the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, have also done work to evaluate the potential risks that exist from synthetic turf and recycled rubber tire crumbs. What interactions has EPA had with other federal agencies on this matter? Do those studies provide EPA with additional relevant information to assess the hazards and exposures associated with crumb rubber on artificial turf athletic fields?

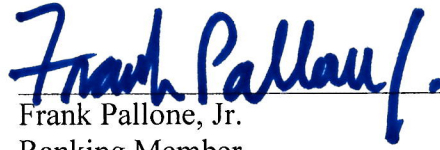
3. Are you aware of other scientific studies on the hazards and/or exposures associated with crumb rubber on artificial turf athletic fields? Do you have access to such studies? Do such studies provide EPA with sufficient information to adequately assess the hazards and exposures associated with crumb rubber on artificial turf athletic fields?
4. To the best of your knowledge, do chemical substances, or a chemical substance, in crumb rubber present a hazard to human health? If so, has the Agency determined whether exposure to such a chemical from crumb rubber presents an unreasonable risk to human health? If so, please explain in detail and describe what other uses are made of crumb rubber that could lead to human exposure.
5. Are you aware of any studies about carcinogens present in field sports generally? Do data indicate that risk is greater for female athletes than for male athletes, for soccer players than for lacrosse, field hockey, or football players, and for one position in soccer more than for others?
6. What does the Agency know about the incidence (percentage of population by sex and age level) of cancers in the general population? To the best of your knowledge, is the incidence for persons who play on fields treated with crumb rubber higher than in the general population?
7. If data indicate a higher incidence of cancer for female athletes, particularly soccer goalies, are you aware of any studies on other potential sources of exposure to carcinogens, for example, chemicals used in equipment distinct to goalies such as gloves, jerseys, or in the goal itself such as paint, piping, or synthetic goal netting? Do any such studies meet EPA's guidance criteria for assessing risk?
8. If there is a distinct correlation linking soccer-play to cancer, are there data indicating a minimum threshold for risk? For example, does the cancer appear in persons who have played at any age or any degree of frequency, or is concern focused on a particular age cohort, or only after a certain level of exposure?
9. Has EPA identified a specific pathway of exposure to hazardous materials in crumb rubber, e.g., inhalation, ingestion, or skin absorption?
10. Are you aware of any industry standards that set limits for exposure to crumb rubber based on potential health hazards? What analysis supports those standards?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We respectfully request your response to this letter no later than Friday, November 6.

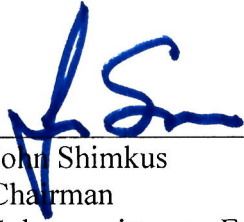
Sincerely,



Fred Upton
Chairman



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member



John Shimkus
Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment
and the Economy



Paul Tonko
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment
and the Economy