



**ARLINGTON COUNTY
SPORTS COMMISSION
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 414
Arlington, Virginia 22201**



February 17, 2020

Dr. Reuben K. Varghese, Director
Public Health Division
Department of Human Services
2100 Washington Blvd.
Arlington County, VA 22204

RE: Safety of materials used in synthetic turf fields and findings in recent studies focused on PFAS

Dear Dr. Varghese,

You have previously spoken about the perceived safety of artificial turf fields used by Arlington residents. Many of those previous conversations have focused on the materials used for infill, (crumb rubber and others) on those fields. There have not been as many discussions thus far focusing on the safety of the plastics used in the “grass” blades and the turf backing materials themselves.

The Sports Commission is interested in all safety aspects of artificial turf, and we would like your thoughts regarding studies mentioned in an article, “[NEW STUDIES SHOW PFAS IN ARTIFICIAL GRASS BLADES AND BACKING](#)”, posted on the Environmental Working Group’s website last Fall. The article cites recent findings from Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, or PEER, the Ecology Center, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), all of which touch on concerns regarding user safety related to the materials used in turf fields.

So that the Sports Commission can properly carry out its advisory role to the County Board, would you please provide us with your thoughts about the above-mentioned studies? What guidance have you provided to Arlington County’s Department of Parks and Recreation regarding user safety and best practices going forward?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Brothwell".

Shirley Brothwell, Chair
Sports Commission

Cc: Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
William Ross, Chair, Parks and Recreation Commission