/// ARE SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS FULL OF DANGEROUS BACTERIAL PATHOGENS LIKE STAPH?....YOU BET THEY ARE

06 NOV / 2015

Author: Mike Woelfel

Tags: There is no tags

Comments: 0

Two studies looking at the same issue come up with two completely different results. One study has results that smell like roses and the other study proves that possible deadly pathogens do exist on synthetic turf fields. Science should be objective and non influencing. To the reader of this, you decide.

STUDY #1-PENN STATE 2008 "A SURVEY OF MICROBIAL POPULATIONS IN INFILLED SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS"

STUDY#2-WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY 2013 "DETERMINATION OF MICROBIAL POPULATIONS IN A SYNTHETIC TURF SYSTEM"

Penn State Study

The 2008 Penn State study by McNitt, A.S., D. Petrunak, D. and T Serensits T., "A survey of microbial populations in infilled synthetic turf fields", has been the one and only source used by artificial turf manufacturers and industry organizations to discredit and scoff at the idea that artificial turf and Staph and MRSA have a dangerous connection. This "Scientific Study" has been used as a reference over and over by sales professionals, marketing professionals and everyone in between in telling the world to quit worrying about Staph infections because artificial turf is safe from harmful microorganisms, even though common sense tells us otherwise. The Synthetic Turf Council who is the self appointed voice of the industry even discredits the dangers of Staph and MRSA and cites the Penn State study and puts the blame on people with poor hygiene, that's right, dirty people.

From the Synthetic Turf Council's FAQ page

Q: Are athletes playing on a synthetic turf more susceptible to MRSA/staph infections?

***MRSA and other staph infections strike due to poor hygiene**, regardless of type of playing surface. That's because it is spread by people in close contact with each other, like athletic team members, healthcare providers and patients, children in day care centers, military recruits, firefighters, and many other groups. Recent studies are in agreement. A California EPA report dated July 2009 stated "it is unlikely that the new generation of artificial turf is itself a source of MRSA."*

A Penn State University study released in January 2009 found there was no difference in survival rates of staph on natural grass and synthetic turf surfaces. In addition, it stated that synthetic turf is not a hospitable environment for microbial activity such as staph. The issue goes beyond abrasions, since athletes can get cuts on any playing field – from the most well-manicured or dirt-compacted natural grass to state-of-the-art synthetic turf fields that are regularly irrigated and cleaned.

Weber State University Study

It so happens that a much more comprehensive research study was conducted in 2013 by Weber State University, "Determination of Microbial Populations in a Synthetic Turf System," and the results of this research will make it clear that the Penn State study and heavily cited by turf manufacturers such as FieldTurf, needs to be questioned for the findings and conclusions. How this research study went unnoticed is hard to understand but now that it was brought to my attention by (Rockwood Turf FB page) I want to share the findings and the results re enforce why I sell UVC equipment to protect athletes against Staph and MRSA, even though the artificial turf industry chooses to ignore the problem.

Jason Bass and David Hintze along with faculty mentor Karen Nakaoka, Ph.D, from Weber State University, compared two synthetic turf fields for the presence of dangerous bacterial pathogens (Staph). The research was to determine if an older field has increased numbers of harmful pathogens versus a new artificial field. Weber State sampled from a field that was a year old and one that was six years old. Unlike the 2008 research study by McNitt at the Penn State the research at Weber State University was a more realistic depiction of the happenings on artificial turf. I will highlight some key differences in both studies as to why the Weber State University research was better planned, better executed and provided a closer depiction of what is really happening on artificial turf fields across the country.

The Weber State study points out some shortcomings of the Penn State study and possible reasons as to why the Penn State study failed to acknowledge the dangers or presence of Staph on artificial turf fields. The Weber State study is very technical but I am going to highlight some of the key findings and some of the key comparisons to the Penn State study.

Penn State study-Conducted at the SSRC, joint venture between FieldTurf and Penn State. Penn State Sports Surface Research Center (SSRC)

Weber State-Funded by Weber State and Weber State Microbial Department

Sample Size of Infill Material Being Tested

Penn State-.075 Grams (Why such a small sample?)

Weber State-10 Grams (More than 10 times the sample size than Penn State)

Collection Time Frame of Samples

Penn State-Just says between June 1 and June 15th, all of 15 days. Samples used were taken in 2006????

Weber State-Once a week for 14 weeks. Very controlled samples.

Location of Samples

Penn State-samples taken from “High Use” and “Low Use” areas, very general.

Weber State-1) Sideline, 2) 50 Yard Line and 3) end of field. 3 locations and same locations on both new and old field being sampled.

Time of Study

Penn State-Height of Summer when field temperatures were at the peak.

Weber State-Height of the Actual Football Season when the fields were in use.

Technical Issues of reasons why the Penn St study did not find Pathogens (Staph)

Penn State-Shortened agitation times for the samples (shortened time means less chance for full discovery of Pathogens, technical please read study)

Penn State-Failed to Isolate S. Aureus (Staph) on samples (read the study because this is technical)

Results-Highlights taken directly from studies

Penn State-“Staphylococcus aureus bacterium were not found on any of the playing surfaces” Smells like Roses

Weber State-“These results indicate that infill material can serve as a potential source for the spread of bacterial pathogens among athletes and that these organisms seem to accumulate over time posing a greater exposure risk if proper cleaning is not routinely performed.”

Skyline - The Big Sky Undergraduate Journal

Volume 1 | Issue 1 Article 1

8-19-2013

Determination of Microbial Populations in a Synthetic Turf System

Jason J. Bass
Weber State University, jasonjbass@gmail.com

David W. Hintze
Weber State University, davidhintze@msn.com

Determination of Microbial Populations in a Synthetic Turf System

Acknowledgments
Faculty Mentors - Karen Nakaoka, Ph.D.; Joel Bass, ATC

Artificial Turf Manufacturers are Acting Like Big Tobacco, Profits Over the Safety of Athletes
February 26, 2014
In "GreenZapr"

Trust the Center For Disease Control When It Comes to Facts About MRSA and Staph
May 15, 2013
In "Artificial Turf Maintenance"

"Scientific Studies" and Artificial Turf-B.S At its Finest
August 27, 2015
In "Staph and MRSA Synthetic Turf"

/// THERE ARE NO COMMENTS YET, BUT YOU CAN BE THE FIRST

/// LEAVE A REPLY

Name

E-mail

Message

Post comment

Notify me of follow-up comments by email.

Notify me of new posts by email.

/// RECENT POSTS

- The UVC180 Fungi Killer versus GreenZapr by GreensGroomer Worldwide
- A Football Coach Points to Synthetic Turf as Cause of Staph Infections
- Football on Artificial Turf is a Game of Chicken with MRSA
- Protecting Kids Against Deadly Artificial Turf Bacteria
- Artificial Turf Equipment Buy Commercial Grade!

/// CATEGORIES

- Artificial Pitches
- Artificial Turf Equipment
- Artificial Turf Maintenance
- Golf Maintenance Equipment
- GreensGroomer Parts
- Greensgroomer Setup with Spring Tine Rake
- Greensgroomer Sports Turf Groomer
- GreenZapr
- LitterKat Turf Debris Sweeper
- MiniZapr
- Moms Be Informed
- Staph and MRSA in Indoor Facilities
- Staph and MRSA Synthetic Turf

/// OUR TWITTER FEED

Find out what's happening, right now, with the people and organizations you care about.

Tweets by @sportsturfnw

Sports Turf NW @sportsturfnw

The SGL180 UVC Fungi Killer versus GreenZapr by GreensGroomer Worldwide sportsturfnw.com/sgl180-uvc-fun…

The SGL180 UVC Fungi Killer versus GreenZapr by GreensGroome…
In America, when you make a claim you back it up with proof, period! Apparently, in Europe, you make a claim based upon what sounds good, no proof needed. Don't get me wrong, if the SGL180 can do...
sportsturfnw.com

26 Oct

Sports Turf NW @sportsturfnw

Possible case of MRSA at Bethel Park High School on.wpxi.com/2dYpQAW via @WPXI

Possible case of MRSA at Bethel Park High School
Possible case of MRSA at Bethel Park High School
wpxi.com

26 Oct

Embed View on Twitter

loading twitter...

/// SPORTS TURF NW

Want more information? Click to Get a FREE Quote **or Call us at 800-541-1285**

At Sports Turf Northwest, we are your GreensGroomer™ worldwide equipment dealer for all your turf needs. Our focus is to provide you with the best customer service while at the same time representing the best artificial and natural turf maintenance equipment on the market.

/// CONTACT INFO

Address: 19785 SW Cipole Road, Sherwood, OR

Phone: 800-541-1285

/// STAY IN TOUCH

Find out what's happening: