

Water - Use It Wisely tells us why artificial turf may not be what you're looking for

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Is Artificial Turf a Good Idea?

Many of us are drawn to artificial turf because we care about the environment. We want to save water and time. We're tired of the grueling tasks of mowing and weeding, as well as applying fertilizers and pesticides. However, if your priority is caring for the environment, artificial turf is not going to be the best option. Here are ten reasons why artificial turf may NOT be the perfect answer.

1. IT'S A PLASTIC RUG

It looks perfect ... at first. That's because the blades of grass are made of synthetic materials, typically polyethylene, polyester, polypropylene, nylon, or a hybrid of these materials. It's essentially an outdoor carpet, albeit one that has been meticulously designed to look like natural plant material.

2. IT ADDS TO THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

Because it is essentially made of plastic, it heats up, and doesn't offer any of the benefits of plants, such as abating the urban heat island effect. More on this later....

3. YOU WILL NEED TO CLEAN IT

It will collect pet and bird droppings, dust and dirt. You'll need to hose down artificial turf with water and rake it to fluff it up and straighten the fibers.

4. IT IS NOT AS SAFE AS YOU THINK

Why do sports fields in warm climates often install an irrigation system for artificial turf? Because it can get really hot. Surface temperatures of artificial grass are 20-50° F higher than natural grass and can reach the same temperature as asphalt pavement. The highest temperature measured was 200° F.

5. IT IS NOT AS SOFT AS YOU THINK

It's hard, and it can hurt if you fall while playing sports or tumbling around with the dog. Unlike grass, it doesn't give. Soil or sand underneath becomes compacted.

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