

State of California • Department of Justice  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
Edmund G. Brown Jr.

## News Release

August 14, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Contact: (916) 324-5500

# Brown Creates Nation's First Enforceable Lead Standards for Artificial Turf

OAKLAND-Fighting to ensure the safety of children's playgrounds and ball fields, Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr. today signed off on an agreement requiring Georgia-based AstroTurf, LLC to virtually eliminate lead from its artificial grass, creating the country's first enforceable lead standards for artificial turf products.

"As schools and daycare centers replace grass with artificial turf, extreme care must be taken to minimize lead exposure," Brown said. "This agreement is the first of its kind and will help make playgrounds and ball fields safe for our children."

In 2008, Brown filed suit against AstroTurf and two other companies for excessive lead levels after testing by the Center for Environmental Health (CEH) found high levels in artificial turf products. Brown's office independently tested AstroTurf and other artificial turf products and confirmed CEH's findings. AstroTurf immediately took steps to begin reformulating its products.

Today's consent judgment requires AstroTurf to reformulate its products so that they contain less than 100 parts per million (ppm), and to further reduce lead levels to 50 ppm by June 2010. Lab results found that some AstroTurf products contained more than 5,000 ppm lead. Lead was added to keep the colors vibrant over time. AstroTurf will be prohibited from selling any existing stock that doesn't meet these standards.

AstroTurf will also provide a grant of \$60,000 to the Public Health Trust to fund "wipe testing" of dislodgeable lead on artificial turf fields at daycare centers, schools and public playing fields in California. If the level of dislodgeable lead exceeds the specified replacement level, AstroTurf will provide replacement turf to the daycare center, school or public field at no cost.

AstroTurf will also provide a mailed warning to all customers who purchased its products in California in the past five years. The warning will (1) inform customers that the turf products contain lead; (2) explain "good maintenance practices" that can effectively reduce exposures to lead; and (3) advise the customers of the availability of the program to test and replace old turf products. AstroTurf will also establish a website to provide information to the public on lead content in its products.

The Los Angeles City Attorney and Solano County District Attorney joined Brown in the case against AstroTurf. In addition to its obligation to replace products that exceed acceptable lead levels, the company will pay \$170,000 in civil penalties, grants and attorney fees.

"Today's agreement with AstroTurf sets a strong standard for other companies who have not yet agreed to eliminate lead risks to children from turf," said CEH Executive Director Michael Green. "Lead is a stunningly toxic chemical that has no place in playing fields for children. We applaud the Attorney General, the LA City Attorney, the Solano County DA and AstroTurf for this accord to protect California's children."

A copy of the consent judgment is attached.

###

[Back](#) | [News & Alerts](#)

