

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES



Artificial Turf Communication and Maintenance Protocol

I. Purpose

To provide a set of procedures for the communications, testing, safety, and maintenance regarding District-owned artificial turf playing surfaces.

II. GMAX Testing:

a. Regulation and Standards

- i. GMAX is the standard testing method developed to determine the shock attenuation of artificial and natural turf athletic fields.
- ii. DGS follows the American Society Testing and Material International standard for maintenance and GMAX testing.

b. Testing Dates

- i. **DC Public School (DCPS) Fields:** June of each calendar year
- ii. **Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Fields:** June of each calendar year

c. Prior to GMAX testing; External Communications

- i. **DCPS** will proactively inform principals, parents and families of the turf testing season dates and possible temporary closure if the field fails GMAX testing as soon as the dates become available but no later than three (3) months from testing dates. In addition, a month in advance of the testing period DCPS will send a reminder to principals, parents and families.
- ii. **DPR** will inform permit holders and residents of the turf testing season dates and possible temporary closure if the field fails GMAX testing as soon as the dates become available but no later than three (3) months from testing dates. DPR will communicate via email, the Rec Track reservation system, social media and Nixle. In addition, a month in advance of the testing period DPR will send a reminder to user groups.
- iii. **DGS** will inform DCPS field permit holders about the turf testing dates and possible temporary closure if the field fails GMAX testing as soon as the dates become available but no later than three (3) months from testing dates. In addition, a month in advance of the testing period DGS will send a reminder to DCPS field permit holders.

d. Failed GMAX test - External Communication

- i. In the event of a field's failure to meet the Minimum Satisfactory G-Max Rating Requirements, the testing vendor will notify DGS. DGS will:

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1. Notify DCPS and DPR of the failed test within 24 hours of notification by vendor; and publishes notice on DGS website.
 2. Engage the artificial turf field maintenance vendor to determine estimated time of repair.
 3. Communicate estimated time of repair to DCPS and DPR within 1 business day of receipt by the maintenance vendor. This is dependent on the severity of the repair, material availability, and weather conditions.
 4. Re-test the field once repairs are completed to ensure it meets the Minimum Satisfactory G-Max Rating Requirements.
- ii. Within two business days of a field's failed test DGS, DCPS will share results with school leaders for immediate distribution to parents and families. An estimated time of repair shall be shared, if available.
 - iii. Within two business days of a field's failed test DGS will share results with DCPS field permit holders. An estimated time of repair shall be shared, if available.
 - iv. Within two business days of a field's failed test DGS, DPR will share results with permit holders and residents via social media and Nixle and post link to any information that DGS posts. An estimated time of repair shall be shared, if available.

e. Failed GMAX test – Internal DGS Communication

- i. The DGS Communication Division is responsible for all media requests regarding artificial turf and playing fields in the District of Columbia except any FOIA request. All FOIA requests shall be handled by the DGS FOIA officer.
- ii. When a field is deemed failed, DGS Communications Division immediately notifies the DGS Executive Leadership Team, OCA, EOM Communication department and the communication departments of affected agencies. Information relayed will include which fields will be closed. The Communications Departments of DPR and DCPS will notify their respective agency leadership of the test results and of the field closure. A second notification will be sent via email of the remediation plan of such field once its determined.
- iii. DGS Communication Division then notifies DGS Legislative Affairs team who will notify the affected Councilmember(s). Information relayed will include the test results, the field closure and how constituents have been notified. A second

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notification will be sent to the DGS Legislative Affairs team once a remediation plan of the such field is determined.

- iv. DGS Communications Division will notify the affected ANC Commissioners.

III. Artificial Turf Field Maintenance

- a. Routine Assessment and Maintenance in accordance with industry standards and any applicable Field Builder's Maintenance Requirements
 - i. Maintain Proper Infill Levels, including adding infill to maintain a safe level play surface
 - ii. Conduct inspections and perform minor repairs
 - 1. Inspect seams, joints and edges for integrity
 - 2. Inspect surface for bunching and/or loose surface
 - 3. Conduct minor repairs. DGS will notify DCPS and DPR of the list of minor repairs at the end of monthly maintenance cycle.
 - iii. Surface Cleaning Services
 - 1. Keep the surfaces clean and free of debris and contaminants
 - 2. Remove and dispose of all foreign waste
 - 3. Remove and dispose all organic waste and weeds
 - 4. Spot disinfect surfaces exposed to organic waste as needed
 - 5. Disinfect entire play surface once per quarter
 - 6. Metal removal through use of magnetic device
 - 7. Treat surface for weed and pest intrusion as needed
 - iv. Surface Grooming Services
 - 1. Brush/sweep/rake to keep fibers upright and improve appearance
 - 2. In the event of severe compaction or contamination, use of mechanical infill brushing, suction, cleaning and return system will be used, where applicable.
 - v. Maintenance activities that will take the field out of commission for more than one day to complete are considered major and must be reported as such.
 - 1. DGS will notify DCPS and DPR of the repair and coordinate remediation.
 - 2. DGS shall publish notice on the DGS website and post signage at DPR and DCPS fields with information regarding: reason for closure, date and any remediation plans, and contact information.

IV. Artificial Turf Heat Protocol

- a. In the event of a Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) heat advisory for the District of Columbia:
 - i. DCPS will inform principals of HSEMA-issued heat advisories and to use caution when

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- using recreational surfaces with the potential to become hot, including synthetic fields.
 - ii. DPR will inform permit holders and residents of heat advisories via email, the Rec Trac reservation system, social media and Nixle when using recreational surfaces with the potential to become hot, including synthetic fields.
 - iii. DGS will post on its website the heat advisory with notice to use caution when using recreational surfaces with the potential to become hot, including synthetic fields.
- b. Signage at Fields
- i. DGS, in partnership with DPR and DCPS, will install permanent signs at each artificial turf location indicating the potential for increased surface temperatures on warm days.
 - ii. Signs will be revised, replaced, or complemented if there is any change to District policy that would alter the information necessary to provide to field users at the site level.