

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

September 20, 2017

**CONTACT:**

Joia Nuri (DGS) – (202) 308-1839; joia.nuri@dc.gov

**DGS Status of Turf and Field Recommendations, Repairs and Replacements**

*Several Schools, Recreation Center Fields Repaired and Returned to Normal Use*

**(WASHINGTON, DC)** – The Department of General Services (DGS) operates and maintains fifty-two (52) artificial fields for the District. These include fields at DC Public School (DCPS) and Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) facilities. DGS is dedicated to ensuring the safety of all District residents and users of these fields. The operation and maintenance of these fields includes installation, testing, repair, and replacement, if necessary.

Throughout each year GMAX testing is conducted on the fifty-two fields. The tests are designed to ensure the playing surface of the field(s) is impact-safe for users. GMAX is the standard testing method developed to determine the shock attenuation of artificial and natural turf athletic fields. The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International’s standard establishes a GMAX value of 200 for the maximum allowable limit for safety. Any higher GMAX values indicate harder playing surfaces, leading to higher probability of concussions and other injuries from users or players impacting with the surface.

If a field tests higher than the 200 value standards, DGS will make necessary repairs or, if necessary, replace the field. Often times, it is only small areas of the field that test higher and require targeted repairs as opposed to replacing the entire field.

In March and April of 2017, the District’s consultant conducted field tests. The results were forwarded to DGS in June. The results showed that only one field, located at Janney Elementary School in northwest, tested higher that the acceptable standard. Noting the warranty had

-2-

recently expired on this field and concerned this was the first time DGS experience a failed field, DGS determined it important to take an immediate and proactive action and bring in a third-party manufacturer to retest and confirm the results on all fifty-two fields. The retest resulted in 16 fields testing higher than the standard. Nine were recommended for repair and seven for replacement. Due to the inconsistencies in the two reports, DGS brought in another third-party test-only consultant to do additional tests on the seven fields recommended for replacement. The final test results determined three fields recommended for replacement.

DGS is moving forward with the replacement of the three fields and the all the repairs for the other fields noted in the reports. A full timeline and list of the fields is provided below.

With repairs and replacement underway, DGS is now focused on developing new procedures and testing protocols for the District’s fields. It has committed to comprising an interagency working group to include DGS, DCPS, DPR, the Office the City Administrator (OCA), the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME), and the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE). A draft report and recommendations is scheduled for release in late February 2018 with a final report due by end of March of the same year.

**Timeline of Field Testing**

April/May FieldTurf conducts initial testing.

June FieldTurf provides results to DGS. Report states one field reported with higher than standard results.

June/July DGS through emergency procurement brings on a third-party manufacturer to conduct a re-test of all 52 fields

July Third-party manufacturer report states 16 fields in need of repair. Nine in need of repair, seven for replacement

July/August DGS begins immediate repairs on the nine fields designated for repair. DGS coordinates with DC agencies, DCPS and DPR to begin coordinating these repairs.

DGS brings in a third-party neutral turf-test-only manufacturer to retest the seven fields recommended for replacement. Four fields come back with recommendations for replacement and/or repair. These include replacement of Janney Elementary School in northwest, John Eaton School in northwest (both Ward 3) and Adams Elementary School in northwest (Ward 1). Brightwood Elementary School (Ward 4) in northwest tested to need repairs.

-3-

August DGS begins replacement of the three fields and repair of Brightwood Elementary.

September Janney Elementary replacement field is complete

October John Eaton, Adams and Brightwood Elementary fields will reopen.

**Fields That Have Been Repaired and Are Open**

McKinley High School

Wilson High School

Riggs Recreation Center

Bell/Lincoln (Columbia Heights EC)

Deanwood Recreation Center

Jellef Recreation Center

Bundy Field

Parkview Recreation Center

Upshur Park

**Fields Closed and Being Repaired**

Brightwood Elementary School ***(to be completed 2nd Week of October 2017)***

**Fields Closed and Being Replaced**

Janney Elementary School ***(delivery September 21, 2017)***

Adams Elementary School ***(delivery by 2nd Week of October 2017)***

John Eaton Elementary School (***originally planned for 2nd Week of October 2017)***

**Fields Returned to Normal After Spot Repair**

Ross Elementary School

Tubman Elementary School

Mann Elementary School

###