COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

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November 5, 2014

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Cynthia A. Harding, M.P.H.
Interim Director

SUBJECT: **CRUMB RUBBER IN ARTIFICIAL TURF (Board Agenda of October 21, 2014; Item 49-A)**

On October 21, 2014, your Board passed a motion to direct the Department of Public Health (DPH) to evaluate the health risks associated with artificial turf made from crumb rubber, and to provide a recommendation on its continued use in County parks.

Crumb rubber is recovered from used tires and utilized as a ground cover under certain playground equipment, running tracks, and athletic fields; and also as infill between artificial turf fibers to provide stability, uniformity, and resiliency. This material is currently in use in at least 4,500 fields and playgrounds throughout the United States.

Recent media reports have raised questions regarding the safety of crumb rubber in artificial turf, and a possible association with cancer. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has studied the chemical content of crumb rubber, and states that the concentrations of chemicals in their study were below levels of concern. The EPA's study was limited, but it remains the most comprehensive study performed to date. The recent media reports suggested a link between lymphoma and athletic play on artificial turf. These purported links are not based on scientific or epidemiological studies. Future study by the EPA may be warranted to fully evaluate the health implications of exposure to crumb rubber; however, current scientific data does not indicate a concern for cancer.

At this time, DPH does not recommend warnings or restrictions for park-goers at Bassett Park, Col. Leon H. Washington Park, Lennox Park, or El Cariso Community Regional Park, all of which utilize artificial turf with crumb rubber. DPH will continue monitoring the scientific literature on this matter, and will report on any new findings to the Board as they occur.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please let me know.

CAH/JDG/cr
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c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors