



Testimony of Anne Hulick, RN, MS, JD;  
Director, CT Clean Water Action and Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut.

Before the CT General Assembly's Children's Committee, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Testimony in support of HB 5139, An Act Concerning The Use Of Recycled Tire Rubber At Municipal And Public School Playgrounds**

Good afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and distinguished members of the Children's Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I speak on behalf of Clean Water Action and the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut in support of HB 5139, An Act Concerning The Use of Recycled Tire Rubber At Municipal and Public School Playgrounds.

My name is Anne Hulick, and I am the Director of CT Clean Water Action and the Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut (Coalition). I am also a nurse with many years of experience in environmental health. The Coalition is a large advocacy organization comprised of over fifty-five member organizations of health professionals, environmental justice advocates, labor groups, public health professionals, environmental experts, faith based groups, scientists and many individuals across Connecticut that are concerned about the growing body of research linking exposure to toxic chemicals with the rise in serious diseases.

Tire rubber contains many harmful chemicals including styrene, butadiene, cadmium and other toxic chemicals. Many of these are neurotoxic or carcinogenic. When the recycled tires are crumbled and used in artificial turf, the small crumb infill still contains the toxic chemicals and there is growing evidence that in this context, the risk of exposure from ingestion, inhalation and dermal absorption occurs. Children who play on these fields often report having black dust and crumbs all over their body and clothes. Young children are particularly vulnerable due to their hand to mouth behavior and being low to or on the ground. Reports of soccer players with cancers appears to be on the rise. Though there may not be conclusive evidence linking exposure to crumb rubber with disease, the potential harm should be enough to cause us to halt installation of these fields until we know more. Just last week, Senator Blumenthal and others applauded a decision for a comprehensive study of the risks of exposure from artificial turf.

There are other significant problems with artificial turf made from recycled tire rubber. Turf burns or abrasions are common. Recycled tire rubber fields are sources of extreme heat. Temperatures of 160 degrees Fahrenheit have been recorded on fields, contributing to burns, dehydration, heat stress or heat stroke. Young children are less able to regulate their body temperature and are particularly vulnerable. The small dust and pellets is often tracked off the field and into homes, thus increasing the length of time of exposure.



Early studies on exposure to toxic chemicals from these fields were inconclusive and did not fully evaluate all routes of exposure. It is prudent to take a precautionary approach when there is risk of harm to children. At the very least, we should prevent the installation of these fields where young children play the most.

Clean Water Action and the Coalition strongly supports HB 5139 and urges its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne B. Hulick".

Anne Hulick, RN, MS, JD