

Scrap Tire Marketing Program

Revised 1/19

PLAYGROUND SURFACING FACT SHEET

Applications:

- Two types of playground surfaces exist: loose fill and solid mats
- Loose fill material is composed of rubber chips that range in sizes from ½” to ¾”
- Two types of solid mat surfaces are available: pour-in-place and conventional matting
- Pour-in-place is composed of recycled tire material and binding agents and is poured under and around playground equipment, much like concrete
- Conventional mats are manufactured to fit any shape and are locked in place at the playground site

Benefits:

- Non-toxic and clean
- Provides a resilient and safe surface for play
- Does not attract or retain moisture
- Environmental benefits from recycled use of tire material
- Made of durable rubber material that lasts for years
- Does not attract animals, pests, or bacteria
- Reduces dust around playing areas

Common Questions:

Can the surfaces become too hot for children to safely play on?

Although the material is made of heat absorbing rubber, steps have been taken by manufacturers to safeguard children from being burned by providing painted chips and matting of lighter colors that help to reflect light and heat. Rubber chips tend to stay about 20 degrees cooler than play sand while asphalt and concrete can reach average temperatures as high as 110 degrees F during warmer months.

Since these products are made from recycled tire material, do they pose a health risk?

The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) evaluated the possibility and found no risks of heavy metal exposure, toxic ingestion, or skin sensitizations due to any form of contact with the recycled tire material.

Does rubber surfacing really make a difference on the playground?

Hard surface material such as asphalt and concrete are considered unsuitable for children to play around. Wood mulch, dirt, sand, and grass all may fall short of the shock absorbing capabilities that a rubber playground surface provides.

