

## Artificial Turf

### Definition

Sec. 3.2.2.30. **Artificial or synthetic turf** means a manufactured surface with man-made materials, which is made to replicate the appearance of live organic/natural turf, grass, sod, lawn.

### Standards

Sec. 7.8.1.K. ~~No artificial vegetation shall be used to meet the standards of this section except alternative grass surfaces for governmental facilities.~~ The limited use of artificial/synthetic turf, grass, sod, lawn, etc., is allowed per the following standards:

1. The use of artificial turf is limited to the following uses:
  - a. Residential properties: Allowed in the rear and side yard areas if not visible from the right-of-way. Rear and side yard areas where artificial turf is visible from the right-of-way shall be screened from view by continuous opaque fencing or hedge material with a minimum height of five (5) feet. Artificial turf shall be prohibited in front yards.
  - b. Residential common areas: Allowed in areas designated as recreation or amenity areas on the approved site plan.
  - c. Non-residential:
    - i. Commercial: Allowed in areas that are not required to meet the minimum landscape requirements and shall be designated on the approved site plan. Artificial turf shall be prohibited in designated landscape buffers, areas adjacent to, or visible from, any rights-of-way, drainage and swale areas, lake/canal bank, or other areas within the site that are not required to meet the intent of the landscape requirements as determined during the site plan review process.
    - ii. Recreational Areas: Allowed for athletic/activity fields, as designated on an approved site plan. All athletic/activity fields shall be designed to meet the industry standards for the intended use.
2. An Engineering Permit shall be required prior to installation. At minimum, the permit application submittal shall include plans and documentation, including material specifications, dimensions, cross section(s), and installation details, including subgrade, drainage, base/leveling layer and infill. Additional specifications details, documentation and/or calculations may be required at the sole discretion of the Wellington Engineer.
3. Materials used for an artificial turf system shall meet, or exceed, the following minimum standards:
  - a. Wellington shall determine if the artificial turf system replicates the appearance, texture, and natural green color of live organic/natural turf, grass, sod, lawn, etc. A minimum 8"x10" sample of the surface material shall be submitted with the permit application.
  - b. The backing material shall be made of non-latex materials, and shall be permeable with a minimum of four (4) layers and have a minimum permeability rate of 30 inches per hour. The underlying material shall be designed and installed to meet the applicable permeability rate necessary to meet the minimum compensating

- storage volumetric requirements. Provide documentation that the underlying material permeability rate meets the compensating storage volumetric requirements.
- c. The allowed surface fibers are Polyethylene (PE) and Polypropylene (PP). Plastic or nylon materials are prohibited for outdoor use.
  - d. The artificial turf system shall have a minimum 15-year warranty from a United States manufacturer, which warrants the artificial turf against fading, discoloration, wear, cracking, drying, and pile height reduction. Topically applied UV treatments are prohibited. An acceptable UV inhibitor is one that is mixed into the artificial turf fiber/yarn resin during the manufacturing process.
  - e. Minimum pile (turf blade) height shall be 1.5 inches and minimum face weight of 65 ounces per square yard. Recreation areas with specialized surfaces for athletic/active fields, putting greens, bocce ball courts, etc., are allowed with a reduced pile height if engineered for the specific use and designated on an approved site plan.
  - f. Natural organic infill and underlying materials that minimize solar/heat absorption, toxic contaminants and/or other negative environmental and health impacts shall be used. Lab test results supporting all claims shall be submitted with the permit application.
  - g. The artificial turf system shall meet all ratings for lead, fire retardant, and other applicable standards per American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards. The turf yarn and backing materials shall be disposable under normal conditions at any local landfill station. All tests, documentation, or product approvals showing the materials meet this standard shall be submitted with the permit application.
- 4. Artificial turf shall be treated as impervious surface area and be considered as impervious surface for purposes of calculating maximum impervious surface percentage per the approved site plan and/or engineering plan for the subdivision. Drainage plans and calculations shall be submitted with the permit application. Ponding and pooling of water shall be a violation of the LDR.
  - 5. Artificial turf systems shall be setback a minimum of three (3) feet from the property lines in the rear yard areas of residential properties. Alternative setbacks on non-residential properties may be required depending on use and location of the artificial turf during the site plan and/or permitting process.
  - 6. Artificial turf systems shall not be located in any easements, including but not limited to drainage, water, sewer, utilities, or lake/canal maintenance easements, except as approved at the sole discretion of the Wellington Engineer.
  - 7. Landscaping (trees, shrubs, groundcover, etc.) shall be required when installed in areas with underlying materials to mitigate the heat island effect and in areas with surrounding hardscape/pavement, including foundation areas, landscape islands, and divider medians. Existing shade trees or shade trees required to be installed in areas with hardscape/pavement during the site plan or permitting/inspection process shall

be allowed to grow to their natural full canopy spread. The shade tree shall be a species that will provide a minimum 75% coverage of the designated artificial turf areas once the tree is mature.

8. The installation and maintenance of artificial turf shall:

- a. Appear natural at all times. Any deviation from a natural look due to improper installation or lack of maintenance shall be a violation of the LDR.
- b. Be visually level, with the grain pointing/running in the same direction and no visible surface seams between panels. Edges and seams shall be anchored and appear natural and groomed.
- c. Include infill material that is brushed in to ensure the fibers/blades are upright, hold the turf in place, and provide a cushion. Infill may not be required if the artificial turf is engineered for recreation areas with specialized surface and approved by the Wellington Engineer.
- d. Be separated a minimum of six (6) inches from landscape areas to protect the health and growth of living vegetation, prevent intrusion of weeds and living vegetation, and prevent radiant heat on living vegetation.
- e. Be designed to ensure that the irrigation system heads/pipes are capped off and/or directed away from areas with artificial turf. It shall be a violation of the LDR to irrigate artificial turf on non-athletic/activity fields.
- f. Include a maintenance plan to inspect, test, and replace the turf as it ages or deteriorates and/or fades color. Maintenance shall include, but is not limited to, routine cleaning, brushing, debris removal, repairing, and replacement. Artificial turf shall be free of weeds, dirt/mud, stains, tears, holes, impressions, and abrasions. Cleaning and disinfecting (eliminate odors) of affected areas shall be conducted regularly, and immediately when necessary. The use of water to clean artificial turf shall be limited to the spot cleaning of affected areas as necessary. Continued/preventative maintenance is required to ensure the artificial turf functions/drains as permitted and holds the approved aesthetic designed approved for use. Failure to maintain, repair and/or replace the artificial turf in accordance with the LDR shall be a violation of the LDR.