INFILL RECLAMATION

Infill reclamation is the extraction and reuse of the infill** from an existing synthetic turf field. One such reuse is placing the extracted infill into a new synthetic turf field. In many cases, the extracted infill will be supplemented with “new” infill product in the finished field system.

Infill reclamation is sometimes utilized in an effort to be environmentally conscious and may represent a cost savings for the owner. Reusing infill may allow a project to qualify for additional LEED credits beyond those awarded for “1st use” crumb rubber.

A number of items need to be addressed when considering infill reclamation:

1. The owner needs to clearly understand the pros and cons of infill reuse and should authorize the process. Use of reclaimed infill should always be disclosed in writing to the owner.
2. The characteristics of the reclaimed infill should be identified. The process should include:
   - A reliable sample collection method
   - Quantification of the average weight of infill per field unit (usually per sq foot)
   - Calculation of the ratio of sand and rubber per unit
   - Identification of the type of sand and rubber; rubber should be from domestic truck and passenger tires only
   - Testing of the reclaimed infill, including ASTM 3188/CA Prop 65 for metals
   - Calculation of the amount of reclaimed infill and amount of supplementary infill to be used in the new field system
   - Construction of a sample finished product for owner approval
   - Testing of the proposed system, such as Gmax/HIC and other performance standards
3. Elimination of as many metallic, non-ferrous and organic contaminants as possible
4. Assurance that the reclamation, blending, and reinstallation processes do not infringe any valid patents or adversely affect any manufacturer’s warranties.

When done with full transparency and to acceptable levels of professionalism, reuse of reclaimed infill is an environmentally sustainable and cost effective option for the design professional, owner and field contractor to consider.

**The majority of fields installed in the US are a combination of sand and crumb rubber and this position paper speaks primarily to this case. Reclamation of other infills, in combination with sand or as homogenous materials, should be evaluated in a similar manner.