

# **Breckenridge Recreation Center Artificial Turf Field**

## **USERS GUIDE**

### **History of Artificial Turf**

Artificial turf was created in 1965. The first synthetic turf fields were not much more than a green plastic indoor-outdoor carpet. At the time, members of the industry thought that as more teams moved to indoor stadiums, grass would not grow as well and would require a substitute.

While artificial turf today has evolved from the plastic mats of the “old” turf, newer turf is still attached to mats, but now have fibers composed of polyethylene lubricated with silicone. A layer of expanded polypropylene or “rubber granules” and sand serve as an “infill” to add shock absorbency. It is recommended that the “infill” be replenished on an annual basis.

### **Reasoning Behind Artificial Turf Field**

Natural grass fields and turf fields both have advantages and disadvantages. In a high alpine environment such as Breckenridge, turf fields will have the advantage in the areas of maintenance and availability. Natural grass fields in high alpine environments are susceptible to disease, slow recovery/repair and wetness leading to damage of the natural grass. Typically, natural grass fields can only be utilized typically during the Summer and Fall months because you cannot clear snow off the field with the high amount of snowfall during the Winter and Spring months. Large amounts of snow can also kill off healthy grass. Playing sports on a very wet natural grass field can cause irreversible damage to the field in which new sod annually must be set in to fix the damaged grass. With artificial turf, the recreation department will be able to better utilize the field space. Snow will be able to be plowed off of the field creating open practice space much earlier in the Spring. The turf field will prevent the Department from having to replace several yards of sod annually, saving in monetary funds. Maintenance costs of the turf field will be minimal, including not having to mow the field weekly during the Summer and Fall Months. Overall, turf is a better option for utilization in a high alpine environment such as ours.

In all, the advantages of artificial turf lie in its ability to withstand heavy use, even during or immediately after a rain or snow storm. Fields enduring high traffic situations such as ours throughout the year, particularly Fall and Spring, benefit from its durability and effective drainage systems when properly incorporated into the field design.

### **Artificial Turf Field Rules**

- Dogs and other animals are **NOT** allowed on the artificial turf at any time
- Only water is allowed on the field, no other food or drinks permitted
- No chewing gum or chewing / spitting of seeds is allowed on the field
- No smoking, fireworks, or other source of open flame is allowed on or near the field
- Plastic or rubber cleats or turf shoes are preferred and recommended for use during sport play – absolutely no metal cleats or high heels are allowed on field
- Remove all mud / debris from shoes before entering onto artificial turf
- The field is open for drop-in public use on a first come first play basis unless permitted by a private party – drop-in users should share space with others as safely possible
- No painting, chalking, or otherwise creating additional markings or lines on the field is allowed
- No bicycles, rollerblades, or skateboards allowed on artificial turf
- No golfing, throwing of shot puts / javelins is allowed on field
- No use of corner flags or other field markers that require use of a spike being driven into the artificial turf

### **Things to Know When Playing on Artificial Turf**

- Artificial turf can cause burns to exposed skin similar to carpet burns – cover your skin to prevent burns and abrasions
- The surface of artificial turf can be much hotter than the air temperature on a sunny day – stay hydrated and avoid heat exhaustion
- You may gather pieces of the black rubber infill material in your clothes and shoes, and on your body – shake your shoes out and clothes off to prevent taking them home with you