

**City of Lake Worth Beach
Tree Advisory Board**

ARTIFICIAL GRASS PROS and CONS

PROS

1. Artificial grass does not require mowing, seeding, fertilizing, or watering. It is being marketed as an environmentally friendly way to conserve water and to minimize the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and weed-killers.

CONS

1. **Artificial grass has a big carbon footprint and uses huge volumes of plastic and fossil fuels to be manufactured, transported and installed.**
2. **Artificial grass contains toxic PFAS compounds (forever chemicals), heavy metals and chemicals such as acetone, arsenic benzene, and other carcinogens that can present a serious health threat. The material also emits high levels of methane, a potent greenhouse gas.**
3. **Artificial grass absorbs heat creating heat islands. It can reach temperatures of up to 200 degrees in the FL summer.**
4. **Pieces of artificial grass break down, contaminate our soils, float into the city's sewer system, release harmful compounds and pollute our waterways with microplastic and other chemicals.**
5. **Artificial grass deprives contact with natural surfaces, kills soil life beneath it and has no wildlife benefit.**

By creating a dense plastic barrier on top of compacted soil and sand, no garden material can reach the soil beneath it. Soil is a natural carbon store especially if plants are growing in it, slowly taking carbon from the atmosphere and putting it back into the plants and the ground. Removing a large area of planting that is actively locking carbon into the ground releases that locked carbon back into the atmosphere. A turf lawn has a base layer of wildlife value

because it's a good home to millions of soil-dwelling microscopic organisms that keep soil healthy.

6. Plastic grass can't or won't be recycled.

The manmade plastic materials are often bound together making it impossible to separate them and therefore making it impossible to recycle, because recycling of the materials requires them to be separated and pure.

7. Artificial grass lawns need cleaning and maintaining.

Artificial grass lawns don't recycle germs and other debris so you need to sanitize them with biocides to prevent health risks from animal droppings and bacteria.

8. University of Florida does not consider artificial turf "Florida friendly" or environmentally acceptable.

The experts said it holds in heat and raises the temperature of neighborhoods; it allows microscopic petroleum pollutants to seep into the soil and water table; it kills the beneficial bacteria and microorganisms underneath; it collects animal feces; and it is an awful substitute for conscientious natural xeriscaping.