

RMA, Liberty Tire praise EPA crumb rubber study

By Miles Moore, Senior Washington reporter

WASHINGTON (Dec. 11, 2009) — Two of the most prominent voices for scrap tire recycling in the U.S. are praising a recent limited study by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that concluded crumb rubber used as artificial athletic turf and playground surfacing poses no threat to human health or the environment.

“Today’s report is not a surprise,” said Michael Blumenthal, Rubber Manufacturers Association vice president and the association’s expert on scrap tires. “Many studies and tests have shown over many years that the use of recycled tire rubber in consumer applications such as playground and athletic fields are not only safe but have several significant safety benefits.”

Liberty Tire Recycling L.L.C., the Pittsburgh-based tire recycling giant, also had kind words for the EPA study.

“People have a right to be concerned about their health and the health and safety of their children,” said Liberty Tire Chairman and CEO Jeffrey Kendall. “The findings of these studies and the EPA study should ease any concerns that people might have about products that are made from recycled rubber tires. They’re safe.”

Last year, the RMA sponsored a review of the available scientific literature on the health and environmental effects of artificial turf made from recycled tire rubber. The review found no significant negative effects, and the EPA study reaffirms the RMA findings.

The EPA plans to host a meeting in the spring of 2010 involving federal and state government agencies to review the results of all crumb rubber studies and determine future actions. Recycled rubber industry stakeholders and members of the general public will be asked to provide information and testimony for the meeting, said Peter Grevatt, director of the EPA’s Office of Children’s Health Protection.

Approximately 13 million scrap tires are used annually for athletic fields and playground cover, according to the RMA.