



Maintenance guidelines for 3g surfaces

The following represent the views of Sweepfast Ltd at the current time and should only be used in conjunction with manufacturers' recommendations.

Regular maintenance should begin immediately the carpet installation is completed, most installers and manufacturers, recommend regular drag-brushing and no more, this is not adequate to keep the surface free draining and in good condition !

All organic matter should be removed from the surface as soon as possible. Playing on a surface covered in leaves /debris leads to a rapid breakdown of the organic matter which is then pushed down into the infill, by foot pressure, likewise drag brushing when debris is present will break the debris into smaller particles which are then pushed down into the surface, eventually these particles in combination with broken fibres, atmospheric pollution and algal growth will lead to failure of the drainage characteristics of the infill material, this in turn renders the surface dangerous and unplayable with the resultant need and significant cost of a major renovation.

To stop the above happening all organic debris should be removed from the surface regularly, this can be achieved using leaf blowers or with a Greensweep machine, a full sized hockey pitch can be cleaned with a 4.8 metre green sweep gang in approximately thirty minutes and will remove most foreign bodies from the surface, as this machine is designed to collect all debris from the surface it will collect any rubber infill that lies on the surface, this can be retained washed and reapplied when dry if needed.

The surface needs to be drag-brushed regularly, ideally weekly, when conditions allow to keep the infill mobile, and the pile de-compacted, this should only be carried out when the surface is clean !

More aggressive tined harrowing can be carried out at intervals during dry periods to keep the infill and the pile mobile and level.

There is now one machine that combines all the above functions The ATC machine cleans the surface sieves the crumb de-compacts and brushes in one pass.

Annually or bi- annually, depending on the amount of contamination in your area the infill should be cleaned/ recycled using a purpose built Hoerger or similar machine. These machines effectively remove contamination, organic debris and broken fibre from the infill whilst de-compacting the carpet and lifting fibres at the same time.

Moss and algae control are really important as with milder conditions encouraging growth, once they becomes established control is really difficult. Moss spraying with a proprietary moss killer should be carried out at a minimum annually with regular spot spraying between times. Ideally the surface should be sprayed within two weeks

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of annual infill treatments so that any spores exposed and distributed across the surface are destroyed.

The biggest worry for us with 3g pitches is that unlike sand filled surfaces where the contaminated layer of infill is usually close to the surface, in 3g pitches with sand ballast and rubber crumb infill the contamination will build up at the base of the carpet underneath the rubber infill, as the pile on many of these pitches is designed to fold over removing the contamination is going to be a very expensive and difficult task, one that we have not as yet solved, therefore the need for strict hygiene and maintenance on these surfaces is paramount !

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