

Growth of Synthetic Lawn in Lamorinda

By Cathy Tyson



A puppy enjoying his brand new synthetic grass

Photos Cathy Tyson

Is it real or is it plastic? That perfectly green stuff sprouting up in Lamorinda yards may not be grass, but plastic. Nothing like lying on a lush green carpet of polyethylene and nylon to watch the clouds roll by.

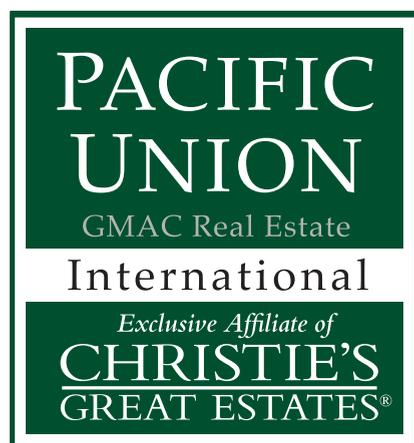
This next generation synthetic lawn is not your mother's Astro Turf. It really does look and feel like the real thing, soft and comfortable under bare feet. Fake lawn owners tout its benefits: zero maintenance, zero watering, and very pet-friendly. Residents wanting to keep pesticide and fertilizer run-off out of our waterways and reduce lawn mower emissions have a "greener" alternative.

To turf or not to turf? For homeowners that prefer the real thing and wouldn't consider the up-front investment, going plastic is probably not an option. But for those with dogs that dig in the yard, mud issues, lots of shade or poor soil conditions, it's worth considering. Another plus is no discoloration from "liquid deposits" from the family pooch.

Due to high usage, all Lamorinda high school stadium fields have made the transition to synthetic turf. "Between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. every day the stadium fields are used by P.E., football, soccer, lacrosse - you name it. Never a game cancelled because of a rain out - at least not because of the turf conditions," said Steve Fishbaugh, Director of Maintenance, Grounds and Transportation for the Acalanes Union High School District. "Miramonte was the first field to switch back in 2000. It really is nice, and not a lot of maintenance."

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Lisa Hctor

(925) 698-5752

www.lisahctor.com

lisa.hctor@prurealty.com

Lic. #01300193

Frith Wiggins

(925) 698-6030

www.frithwiggins.com

frith.wiggins@prurealty.com

Lic. #01433398



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