

AvTurf® Safety System Patent Approved

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Industry Approval In The Wings

The United States Patent Office awarded patent 6,620,482 to **AvTurf®** LLC of Chicago. The patent, covering a safety system for airports and airfields, was issued on September 16, 2003, making it the first product of its kind in the aviation industry, announced Patrick Carr, founder and president of **AvTurf®**.

In May of 2001, the **AvTurf®** system was found acceptable to install in the runway safety areas per 14 CFR Part 139 and applicable advisory circulars.

With completion of testing at the FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center in Atlantic City, the **AvTurf®** system is poised for industry-wide airport acceptance as the synthetic grass surface designed to improve safety, reduce bird strikes and reduce delays associated with runway operations. Testing and research will continue at the FAA Center of Excellence at the University of Illinois.

Manufactured and designed for non-paved areas between runways and taxiways, the **AvTurf®** system was developed and tested specifically for airports and their environment. It has a life expectancy of 10-15 years and serves as a tool for the nation's airports seeking more efficient runways.

According to Carr, the patented system exceeds mandatory federal requirements for airports. The **AvTurf®** system's blanket use in the industry will increase runway safety and save millions of dollars in money lost through runway delays and airfield maintenance.

The testing of the **AvTurf®** system began in 2000 followed by the first-ever installation in Chicago in the fall of 2000. The system successfully passed several tests, including exposure to jet blast, the weight of a Boeing 757 airliner and fire testing. Additionally, emergency and service vehicles totaling 80,000 pounds traversed on the **AvTurf®** system without any damage to the turf. Wildlife biologist observations show that birds failed to congregate on the surface, as they are accustomed to doing on natural turf.

"Our team has personally experienced the many certification inspections, disaster drills, accident investigations, maintenance and safety programs at airports," said Carr. "With the addition of experts in synthetic fiber composition, manufacturing and installation, we have successfully pooled our ideas and experiences to design and implement the first-ever artificial turf for airports."

According to Carr, the aviation industry can anticipate site specific decreases in runway delays due to incursions, bird strikes and maintenance of these areas.