

News Release



AvTurf® Solves Issues of Environment, Safety and Budget Challenges

CHICAGO - Sep. 9, 2002

AvTurf solves multiple of airfield problems

AvTurf In this uncertain economic climate, airports and airlines are looking for any and all ways to save money. Airlines especially are looking for ways to save money while still providing quality service to their customers. One low-cost, long-term, great investment under scrutiny for the entire aviation industry is the installation of the synthetic grass surface AvTurf®

Manufactured by Chicago-based AvTurf® L.L.C. and designed for non-paved areas between runways and taxiways, AvTurf® was developed and tested specifically for airports and their environment. It has a life expectancy of 10-15 years and serves as a convenient, low-tech answer for airports seeking safer and more efficient runways.

In direct comparisons with asphalt and natural grass, airports are realizing that AvTurf® is a less-expensive alternative for non-paved areas. AvTurf® is currently installed on a limited basis at Chicago's O'Hare and Midway airports and Detroit Metro Airport.

Regarded as a "multi-faceted approach" to runway safety, AvTurf® pioneered the concept and creation of an artificial surface in the airport environment for runway and taxiway safety areas. With airports seeking solutions to regain the trust of the traveling public, the installation of AvTurf® provides immediate results in safety, security and cost savings.

Significant Cost Savings

A cost recovery analysis completed by the City of Chicago's Department of Aviation projected that "Midway's initial capital costs to install synthetic grass in the runway safety areas could be recouped in less than six years and may save the airport \$10 million over ten years."

AvTurf® founder Pat Carr, president of Chicago-based AvTurf® L.L.C., points out that the cost benefit analysis of the program does not account for the added savings realized by the reduction in delays.

"The trickle down effect throughout the National Airspace System when one runway is disabled multiplies in thousands of dollars in just hours," said Carr.

Roughly \$4,200 per aircraft per hour is lost when a runway is shut down, according to the report as based on Midway airline tenants. AvTurf® will increase runway safety while at the same time save millions of dollars in money lost through aircraft damage, airfield maintenance and runway delays.

Reduces Bird Strikes

In addition to runway safety, airports are increasingly concerned with wildlife management, especially bird strikes of airplanes. According to an FAA report titled "Wildlife Strikes to Civil Aircraft in the United States, 1990-2001, June 2002" there were 39,177 bird strikes to civil aircraft, resulting in 193,624 hours of aircraft down time and \$400 million in monetary losses. This problem only seems to be getting worse, as there were only 1,719 strikes reported in 1990 compared to a whopping 5,547 in 2001.

AvTurf® negates the likelihood of birds and wildlife congregating at the airport to feed or nest, and reduces the cover, food and water wildlife required for sustenance. Modifying the birds' habitat reduces the attractiveness of airports for birds.

Successful Testing

The lab testing of AvTurf® began in early 2000; followed by the first-ever installation in Chicago in December of 2000. AvTurf® successfully passed several tests at Midway Airport, including exposure to a jet blast, the weight of a Boeing 757 airliner and fire testing. Additionally, emergency and service vehicles in excess of 80,000 pounds traversed daily on AvTurf® 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. Carr says his team has worked hard to bring the product to a successful implementation.

"Safety is still paramount and goes hand in hand with security," said Carr. "The installation of AvTurf® makes each runway more efficient, safer and less dependent upon field manpower. It will create a sterile environment in the air operations area, which is critical in maintaining security. The investment return will be a reality in less than six years or immediately in the prevention of an accident. These are improvements the industry needs now."