

Letter of support for SF3869

Mister Chair and Member of the Committee:

My name is Jon Lipinski and I reside in the City of Lino Lakes. I have been researching many different synthetic grass products for approximately three years. I have a background in planning and environmental due diligence. The purpose of this was to utilize a drought-tolerant, low-maintenance, alternative option to grass that wouldn't need to drain our valuable resources and still allow for safe play in the yard. After much research, we decided to go with ForeverLawn's line of eco-friendly synthetic grass, specific to our yard for the reasons listed below:

- Water conservation (1,984- to 2,976-gallons of water saved per week based on 1 to 1.5-inches of water per SF per week needed to maintain a healthy lawn)(13,888- to 20,832-gallons per year saved based on 7 month operations of irrigation just from our property);
- No fertilizers and chemicals in addition to no runoff (2008 EPA study est. 40-60% of lawn fertilizer is carried to surface and ground water);
- No noise or air pollution from lawn equipment (According to the EPA, one hour operating a new gasoline lawn mower emits the same amount of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxide driving a new car 45 miles (approx. five percent of total air pollution));
- Health issues requiring the need for a low maintenance option;
- No crumb rubber infill, using a natural environmentally friendly anti-microbial sand infill;
- Longevity of the product with an expected useful life of at least 20 to 25 years (many times more with proper maintenance) with no fading, is not flammable, and does not decompose or leach hazardous materials;
- 100% permeable fabric and the sub-base porous rock acts as a better filtration system for groundwater, considering our issues with Manganese in the Lino Lakes public well system;
- Based on the USDA soil map, the soils at our home consist of mucky peat, which has a water permeability rating of 0.57-5.95 in/hr. These products have a water permeability rating of 28.5 in/hr with the synthetic grass and aggregate base having a water permeability rating of 12.6 in/hr. Both of which are well above the normal soil at my residence.
- No stormwater runoff, all rainwater is permeated through, filtered by the base, and recharges the groundwater;
- Beautify our property and neighborhood and increase property values (national sales and realtor studies indicate a 10-15% on average property value increase for synthetic grass landscaping upgrades).

No municipality within the State of Minnesota has an ordinance specifically denying use of the product. The City of Lino Lakes ordinance states "The City may allow flexibility in landscape standards if there are conflicts with solar power, wind power, water harvesting, food production, or **other innovative measures** proposed for the site." After completion of 90% of the project, the City gave ForeverLawn and us a stop work order. We drafted an ordinance for the City, which included high standards for product use and installation. We also provided the City with many research and testing documents proving the benefits of the product; however, we were denied by the City due to an unwillingness to be educated on the product and benefits of use. My yard has remained an aggregate base since August of 2023, all the while my child and the neighborhood children could've been using our yard for play during this relatively warm and dry winter.

This whole ordeal of trying to be a steward to the local environment while running into a municipality with an unwillingness to learn about something beneficial has taken a great toll on my family mentally, emotionally, and financially.

It is my hope that we can start using common sense and learn about alternative products that can aid us in conserving water while not having the need for fertilizers/chemicals. Synthetic grass products manufactured by reputable companies and installed to manufacturers specifications are a great benefit based on research. These products should not only be considered, but encouraged to help save our clean water resources.

Thank you.

Jon Lipinski
75 Robinson Drive
Lino Lakes, MN 55014
jdanelectro@hotmail.com