

Case Study

Smoketown Elementary



Details

Location: Lancaster, PA
Description: 50 FX Play tile = 271-square-foot
Flooring Choice: 4 ¼ inch Carnival Ultra with
Quad Blok Connectors
One-inch PlayGuard Red Tiles

Project Needs

Safe Sports Surfacing
Easy to Maintain

Project Benefits

Superior Injury Protection
Easy to Clean
User-Friendly



PlayGuard Tiles Protect Students at Smoketown Elementary



With just over 700 students, Smoketown Elementary is part of the Contestoga Valley School District. Located in Lancaster, Pa., the school's mission is to provide "a physically and emotionally safe environment where all people will be treated equally and where children will be encouraged to become lifelong learners." While the staff at Smoketown Elementary is predominantly responsible for ensuring the school has a physically and emotionally safe environment, it never hurts to get a little help in the safety department, especially on the playground. So, when Matt Malles, Regional Sales Manager, Mid Atlantic for Ecore, a company that transforms reclaimed waste into performance surfacing, offered to replace the school's existing outdoor four square courts with a better product, Randy McCarty, school principal, was happy to accept.

In March of 2013, Ecore donated two 256 square-foot foursquare courts, using 4 ¼ inch PlayGuard tiles from the Carnival Ultra series, to Smoketown Elementary. Made of performance rubber, PlayGuard is designed to reduce the risk of serious injury associated with falls from playground equipment. Ecore also donated Quad Blok Interlocking Connectors and the labor for the installation. The PlayGuard tiles were placed overtop the existing macadam.

From a safety perspective, the new PlayGuard four square courts have achieved the goal. "On those two four square surfaces, we have not had any injuries," said McCarty. "We certainly have had fewer skinned knees and elbows than we ever had out there before."

In fact, McCarty and the Smoketown Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) was so pleased with the donated surfacing, they teamed up to purchase additional Ecore surfacing for their new ga-ga pits. Ga-ga pits are large octagon or hexagon-shaped pits, where ga-ga ball is played. Ga-ga, a variation of dodgeball, begins when someone throws a gaga ball up into the air. When it bounces, the players say "ga" each bounce for the first two or three bounces.

In October 2013, Smoketown Elementary purchased and installed an additional 500 square-feet of one-inch red PlayGuard tiles, which they purchased through General Recreation of Newtown Square, Pa. Although the installation and labor were not complimentary this time around, McCarty noted the PlayGuard was installed in one day. In addition to being user-friendly, McCarty also noted how easy the PlayGuard surface is to maintain. "We have another school that built the ga-ga pits without a new surface like [Ecore's]," said McCarty. "They have a gravel surface and one of the complaints was that it was really dirty. Our ga-ga pits with the pads are not only safe, but are also clean."

Although purchasing the PlayGuard tiles for the Ga-ga pits was slightly more expensive than simply using cheaper surfacing options, like gravel, McCarty feels this option was worth the money. Since its installation, McCarty has received "nothing but positive feedback from students, teachers, and the PTO members that paid for its installation," said McCarty.

