

## Product Advisory

# Winter Use

**One of the main advantages of synthetic turf is that it can be used as an all-weather surface. Whilst this is true in many respects, there are extremes of weather conditions that may adversely affect the playing characteristics and safety of an artificial grass surface.**

### Low temperature resistance

The temperature resistance of synthetic turf surfaces depends on the base material used for the synthetic turf fibres. Polypropylene synthetic turf fibres should not be used in weather conditions below 0°C (32°F). In general, rubber infilled pitches are made of polyethylene synthetic turf fibres and this base material provides the opportunity to use the pitch down to -20°C (-4°F) in frosty weather. The playing surface will however be harder than usual under sub-zero conditions.

### Snow

In principle, snow and ice are not harmful to an artificial grass surface and can be permitted to melt naturally. There are however some special rules that apply to using the field in snowy conditions. Fields with rubber infill can still be played on when they are covered with snow, but play will compact the snow to form ice. This means that the snow will take longer to melt and once the snow has compacted it is no longer possible to clear it off the field. The snow forms a layer of ice with the grass fibres frozen in. Trying to remove this layer would damage the fibres. It is possible to clear the snow before playing on the field provided this is done in the correct manner. Removing snow with a brush or snow shovel could damage the turf. If a snow shovel has to be used, it should be made of wood or plastic, or fitted with a rubber strip to avoid damage as far as possible. Using a snow-blower to clear snow does not damage the fibres, so this is recommended. Remember that when snow is cleared off the field, some infill material will come away with it. This should be put back into the field as soon as the weather permits.

### Black ice and thaw

A synthetic turf field cannot be used in icy conditions or during thaw. Ice and sometimes also thaw make the field slippery, increasing risk of injury to the players. Playing on black ice can also damage the fibres. During a thaw, some sections of the field may have thawed out while other parts are still icy. When the base is still frozen, there may be standing water on the field. Playing in these conditions can result in deformation of the field and could also lead to nasty injuries. The playing surface is not consistent, when some parts are thawed and others are not. A player cannot anticipate this, so it is dangerous to play in these weather conditions. The field should only be used again once the ground has thawed out completely.