# Public Services increases use of organic weed control with pilot program at Luke Davis Field

Public Services recently teamed up with Organics Alive LLC, Athletic Field Specialists, Non-Toxic Irvine and Non-Toxic Costa Mesa for a year-long pilot program and study on the use of organic fertilizers and materials only at the Luke Davis Sports Field.

The program officially started on Thursday, July 12 and relies solely on organic materials including brewed, beneficial microbial rich solutions, humic acids and worm castings.

The team will inspect, photograph and monitor the site throughout the year taking soil samples on a regular basis to document the microbial activity in the soil as well as gauge the overall success of the program with regards to aesthetics, playability and health of the turf and soil.

This pilot program follows the city’s effort since 2014 to evaluate the effectiveness of organic materials for weed control in addition to an ongoing review of its and other local agencies’ cultural maintenance practices, including mowing heights and plant and shrub trimming standards, to ensure current practices were appropriate to maintain plant health and decrease the need for synthetic pesticides.

Since that time and following the success of the effort, the application of synthetic weed control material in passive parks and sports fields with mixed turf was eliminated. Additionally, the use of glyphosate in parks citywide has been eliminated.

The city has replaced the use of glyphosate with organic materials. The City has also significantly increased the use of mulch to naturally prevent invasive weeds in planters and tree wells. The city more than doubled the amount of mulch used in FY 2017-18.

This pilot program will be used to further evaluate the use of organic materials and maintenance practices throughout the City of Costa Mesa.