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Delaware River Dye Study to Take Place August 5-8

PHILADELPHIA – The Philadelphia Water Department will be conducting a dye test in the Delaware River on Tuesday, August 5 through Friday, August 8 as part of the validation process for a 3D hydrodynamic model using Environmental Fluid Dynamics Code. We are updating a flow model that will help us better understand how pollutants are dispersed in the tidal Delaware. This is one of the scientific tools used in our Green City Clean Waters Plan to better protect and improve the quality of the Delaware River.

The dye chosen for this study is Fluorescein, a green colored fluorescent compound that was first synthesized in 1871, which is the most commonly used dye for both surface and groundwater tracing studies. This dye is considered harmless to humans and will have no environmental impacts in the amounts being used for this study. The dye plume is expected to be visible only for approximately 3 hours as a light tinge of green on the surface of the water in the immediate vicinity of where the dye will be released. The boundaries for the visibility of the dye are Susquehanna Avenue to the North, and Washington Avenue to the South.

This test is being conducted by Woods Hole Group, Inc., a world renowned oceanographic firm, and directed by Rutgers University professor Robert Chant, who has performed numerous similar projects with a recent published study occurring in the tidal Hudson River near New York City. The Delaware River Basin Commission and the US Geological Survey are also participating in this survey. Several boats will be involved in the study, monitoring the plume around the clock for the 3 day test.

The Water Department has put some additional information online, along with a video describing the test and the process that will be taking place for anyone who wishes to learn more about this.

The website is <http://phillywatersheds.org/pwd-delaware-river-dye-study>.

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