

# **Georgia Department of Natural Resources**

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**For Immediate Release**

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The latest round of water testing downstream from the site of a burned chemical plant in Athens-Clarke County shows no evidence of formaldehyde and declining levels of the chemical para-dichlorobenzene, according to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD).

Water sampling is being done at three locations in Trail Creek, which was contaminated July 28 by chemical runoff from the firefighting at the J&J Chemical Co. The sampling locations are near the plant site, downstream at Olympic Drive and at Dudley Park near the confluence of the North Oconee River. Formaldehyde was not detected at any of the three locations. Para-dichlorobenzene was measured at 390 parts per billion (ppb) near the plant, 117 ppb at Olympic Drive and was not detected at Dudley Park.

Those chemical levels do not pose a threat to human health, but EPD will continue to urge people to stay out of Trail Creek until tests show the chemicals are gone.

The chemical company also is proceeding on schedule with work to clean up the soil contamination at the plant site and the sediment in the creek. First steps include identifying the area impacted by the chemicals and then determining how much soil excavation will be necessary.

The runoff from the fire also included a non-toxic blue dye used in toilet bowl cleaners, which has since faded and is no longer visible in the creek.

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