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[TROUBLE SHOOTER](#)

[DAY IN THE LIFE](#)

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## Release of red dye into ocean part of 5-year river plume study

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Researchers soon will release a nontoxic red dye into the Atlantic Ocean off New Jersey and track it as part of a five-year study of the Hudson River plume, according to Rutgers University.

"Essentially, we're tagging a piece of the ocean and following it," said Robert J. Chant, professor of physical oceanography at Rutgers' Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences, in a prepared statement.

The Hudson River plume flows into the ocean at a rate of 500 billion gallons a day, and preliminary studies indicate that it tends to sweep southward along the New Jersey coast, according to Rutgers.

Scientists will add data to computer models for predicting plume behavior and content under a wide range of conditions. Such information will be useful, for example, in predicting potentially dangerous algae blooms along the coast and making decisions about sewage disposal, according to Rutgers.

Chant said he hopes to release the dye Sunday or Monday a few miles southeast of Sandy Hook. He and other oceanographers plan to follow the flow of the dye on a research vessel for about five days and possibly 100 miles or more.

The five-year study, called the Lagrangian Transport and Transformation Experiment (LaTTE), also involves using unmanned submarines, satellites, coastal radar and other technologies. The National Science Foundation is funding the study with a \$4.2 million grant.

Researchers will evaluate how nitrogen, lead, cadmium, mercury and other substances are transported by the plume at different depths and under different conditions.



They also will study microscopic phytoplankton and zooplankton, and how metals and nutrients enter the base of the food chain, according to Rutgers.



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