Industrial Air Pollution in East Point

Key takeaways from a study done with East Point residents

East Point is home to industrial facilities that periodically emit chemicals (volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or semi-VOCs (sVOCs)) into the air of East Point neighborhoods. East Point residents partnered with Emory HERCULES to investigate this industrial air pollution.

What did we want to know?

What chemicals are in the air of East Point neighborhoods near industrial facilities?

What are East Point residents' perspectives and experience with air pollution?

What did we do?

80 air samples were collected around 3 locations:
PPG Industries, William C. Meredith, and Tri-Cities High School.

122 East Point residents responded to a separate survey about community perspectives on air pollution in East Point, health symptoms and diagnoses, and desire for community action.

Chemical name	Present in most samples	Higher levels when odors reported	Chemical characteristics and common uses
2-butanone *(most frequent)*	✓	✓	Solvent, commercial paint strippers, butterscotch smell
Acetone *(2nd most frequent)*	✓	✓	paint thinner
Toluene	✓	✓	Markers, paint, industrial solvent; Traffic related air pollution
Methylene chloride		✓	Paint stripper
2-hexanone		✓	Paint/solvent
Dichlorodifluoromethane	✓		Refrigerant, "greenhouse gas"
n-hexane	✓		Common industrial solvent
Trichlorofluoromethane	✓		Refrigerant, "greenhouse gas"

What did we find?

Air Sampling

Six chemicals were found in over 50% of the samples.

Sixteen other chemicals were identified less frequently.

Certain industrial chemicals were higher when residents smelled odors.

Community Survey

A majority of respondents:

Thought air pollution was a problem and reported smelling chemical odors in their neighborhood.

Experienced health symptoms such as headaches, eye irritation, and sleep problems in the past year.

Were interested in working with community members on environmental health issues like air pollution.

What does this mean for you?

While it is difficult to draw conclusions from a small pilot study...

The air sampling data suggest that:

- Chemicals used by nearby industrial facilities are present in the residential air of some East Point neighborhoods.
- These chemicals appear to be related to the smells reported by residents.
- These chemicals may cause dizziness, tiredness, and nose, throat, and eye irritation at high levels of exposure.

The survey data suggest that:

- Residents in East Point think air pollution is a problem, experience health symptoms potentially related to air pollution, and are interested in working together to address it.

If you want to learn more about these chemicals or report violations:

Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry
https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/index.aspx

Environmental Protection Agency:
Report Violations: https://echo.epa.gov/report-environmental-violations

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