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Downtown group pledges support for neighbors' chemical clean-up

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FRANKLIN — Though the Daniels Drive neighborhood isn't part of the city Downtown Neighborhood Association, the residents here now have the support of downtown home and business owners in their efforts to see a chemical spill near them addressed.

David Morris, president of the Downtown Neighborhood Association, says the group has made cleaning up the Harpeth River and Liberty Creek which runs near Daniels Drive one of the association's top priorities for 2008-09.

For more than 18 months, chemicals that once leaked underground have flowed into the creek and the river, much to the concern and frustration of neighbors, local officials and Harpeth River supporters.

Paint and coatings maker Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Co. took responsibility for the leakage and has laid out plans to address the problem. However, those plans have been met with criticisms along the way.

"We share the same river as our neighbors on the other bank on Daniels Drive," said Morris. "It's disgraceful how long it has taken government agencies to address the toxic chemical issues caused by the lacquer factory."

A number of chemicals have been recovered during the clean-up, including acetone and toluene. Crews also detected the cancer-causing chemical benzene in a testing well in the Daniels Drive neighborhood.
