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**Los Angeles Times**

# Los Angeles hid a methane leak for a year. Activists want the power plant shut down

Sammy Roth 3 hrs ago



Andres Ramirez doesn't know who scrawled the words "SHUT DOWN THE PLANT" across a cinder-block wall outside Valley Generating Station, where red and white smokestacks tower over the northeast corner of the San Fernando Valley.



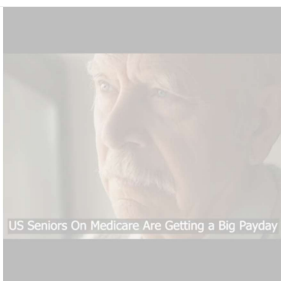
© (Myung J. Chun / Los Angeles Times) Activists have been campaigning for over a year to shut down the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's Valley Generating Station. (Myung J. Chun / Los Angeles Times)

But in a neighborhood burdened by dozens of landfills, recycling centers, junkyards, trucking companies and other noisy and polluting industrial facilities — and bisected by three major freeways — the graffiti artist could have been almost anyone.

Residents of Sun Valley and Pacoima breathe some of California's worst air and suffer from asthma-related hospitalizations at rates far higher than most of the state. So when the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power revealed last month that its power plant had been leaking methane gas for at least three years, local outrage was loud and swift.

The leak "really fired up the community on this greater conversation of why is this plant even open still," Ramirez said as he walked past the facility's main entrance, stepped over sidewalk chalk art reading "KIDS DESERVE CLEAN ENERGY." He pointed out that the surrounding community is mostly Latino and low-income.

"For Black folks, it's police kneeling on their necks. For a community like Sun Valley, it's poisoning you slowly for 75 years," he said.



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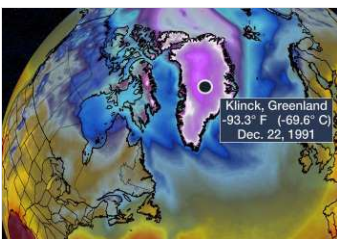
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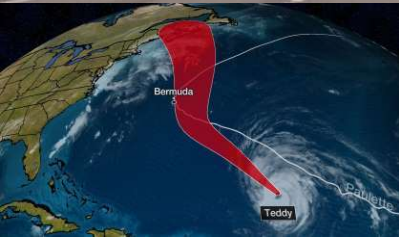
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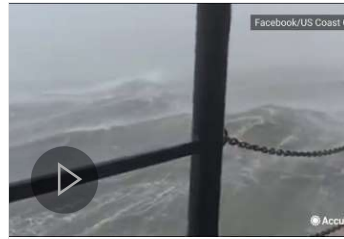
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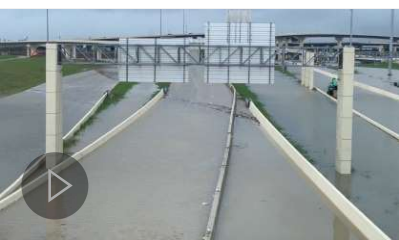
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