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smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

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Santa Monica bans algorithmic rental pricing software after wildfire crisis

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

With little fanfare and but a single comment, Santa Monica once again moved to the forefront of rental protections last week by becoming one of the first U.S. cities to prohibit algorithmic rental pricing software, enacting an ordinance that bans both the sale and use of technology that critics say enables landlords to fix rents at artificially high levels.

The City Council's adoption of the ban comes as the city grapples with a housing crunch exacerbated by January's devastating Los Angeles County wildfires, which displaced thousands of residents and drove up demand for rental properties.

"I just wanted to acknowledge that we've just passed our algorithmic rental price fixing ordinance," Mayor Pro Tem Caroline Torosis said following the council's vote.

"I believe that we're one of the few jurisdictions in the country to do this," she said. "I just want to thank our city attorney and our consumer protection unit for being so diligent and ensuring, especially since the fires, that we are looking at every opportunity to combat price gouging and taking advantage

SEE **RENTAL** PAGE 11

LA Waterkeeper samples from LA River Show shocking levels of PFAS contamination



Waterkeeper

CHEMICALS: The dangerous substances are in a variety of everyday products.

MAAZ ALIN
SMDP Staff Writer

Two major California rivers contain dangerous levels of toxic 'forever chemicals' that significantly increase downstream from wastewater treatment plants, according to a new study that highlights widespread contamination across the state's waterways.

The Los Angeles and Santa Ana rivers both showed elevated concentrations of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) immediately downstream from municipal wastewater facilities, with some contamination levels

SEE **CONTAMINATION** PAGE 7

One of the biggest obstacles to building new CA housing has now vanished

A decade-spanning political battle between housing developers and defenders of California's preeminent environmental law likely came to an end with only a smattering of "no" votes.

The forces of housing won.

With the passage of a state budget-related housing bill, the California Environmental Quality Act will be a non-issue for a decisive swath of urban residential development in California.

In practice, that means most new apartment buildings will no longer face the open threat of environmental litigation.

It also means most urban developers will no longer have to study, predict and mitigate the ways that new housing might affect local traffic, air pollution, flora and fauna, noise levels, groundwater quality and objects of historic or archaeological significance.

And it means that when housing advocates argue that the state isn't doing enough to build more homes amid crippling rents and stratospheric prices, they won't — with a few exceptions — have CEQA to blame anymore.

"Saying 'no' to housing in my community will no longer be state sanctioned," said Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, an Oakland Democrat who introduced the CEQA law as

SEE **CEQA** PAGE 8



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Senate strikes AI regulatory ban from GOP bill after uproar from the states

A proposal to deter states from regulating artificial intelligence for a decade was soundly defeated in the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, thwarting attempts to insert the measure into President Donald Trump's big bill of tax breaks and spending cuts.

The Senate voted 99-1 to strike the AI provision from the legislation after weeks of criticism from both Republican and Democratic governors and state officials.

Originally proposed as a 10-year ban on states doing anything to regulate AI, lawmakers later tied it to federal funding so that only states that backed off on AI regulations would be able to get subsidies for broadband internet or AI infrastructure.

A last-ditch Republican effort to save the provision would have reduced the time frame to five years and sought to exempt some favored AI laws, such as those protecting children or country music performers from harmful AI tools.

But that effort was abandoned when Sen. Marsha Blackburn, a Tennessee Republican, teamed up with Democratic Sen. Maria Cantwell of Washington on Monday night to introduce an amendment to strike the entire proposal.

Blackburn said on the floor that "it is frustrating" that Congress has been unable to legislate on emerging technology, including online privacy and AI-generated "deepfakes" that impersonate an artist's voice or visual likeness. "But you know who has passed it? It is our states," Blackburn said. "They're the ones that are protecting children in the virtual space. They're the ones that are out there protecting our entertainers — name, image, likeness — broadcasters, podcasters, authors."

Voting on the amendment happened after 4 a.m. Tuesday as part of an overnight session as Republican leaders sought to secure support for the tax cut bill while fending off other proposed amendments, mostly from Democrats trying to defeat the package.

Proponents of an AI moratorium had argued that a patchwork of state and local AI laws is hindering progress in the AI industry and the ability of U.S. firms to compete with China.

Some prominent tech leaders welcomed the idea after Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who leads the Senate Commerce committee, floated it at a hearing in May. OpenAI CEO Sam Altman told Cruz that "it is very difficult to imagine us figuring out how to comply with 50 different sets of regulation."

But state and local lawmakers and AI safety advocates argued that the rule is a gift to an industry that wants to avoid accountability for its products. Led by Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, a majority of GOP governors sent a letter to Congress opposing it.

Sanders, who was White House press secretary in Trump's first term, credited Blackburn for "leading the charge" to defend states' rights to regulate AI.

"This is a monumental win for Republican Governors, President Trump's one, big beautiful bill, and the American people," Sanders wrote on X on Tuesday.

Also appealing to lawmakers to strike the provision was a group of parents of children who have died as a result of online harms.

"In the absence of federal action, the moratorium gives AI companies exactly what they want: a license to develop and market dangerous products with impunity — with no rules and no accountability," Florida mother Megan Garcia wrote in a letter last week. Garcia has sued the maker of an AI chatbot she says pushed her 14-year-old son to kill himself. "A moratorium gives companies free rein to create and launch products that sexually groom children and encourage suicide, as in the case of my dear boy."

Cruz over the weekend tried to broker a last-ditch compromise with Blackburn to save the provision. Changes included language designed to protect child safety as well as Tennessee's so-called ELVIS Act, championed by Nashville's country music industry to restrict AI tools from replicating an artist's voice without their consent. Cruz said it could have "passed easily" had Blackburn not backed out.

"When I spoke to President Trump last night, he said it was a terrific agreement," Cruz said. "The agreement protected kids and protected the rights of creative artists. But outside interests opposed that deal."

Blackburn said Tuesday there were "problems with the language" of the amendment.

Cruz withdrew the compromise amendment and blamed a number of people and entities he said "hated the moratorium," including China, Democratic California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a teachers union leader and "transgender groups and radical left-wing groups who want to use blue state regulations to mandate woke AI."

He didn't mention the broad group of Republican state legislators, attorneys general and governors who also opposed it. Critics say Cruz's proposal, while carving out some exemptions, would have affected states' enforcement of any AI rules if they were found to create an "undue or disproportionate burden" on AI systems.

Even Cruz ultimately joined the early Tuesday vote to strip the proposal. Only Sen. Thom Tillis, a North Carolina Republican who opposed Trump's broader budget bill, voted against eliminating the AI provision.

"The proposed ban that has now been removed would have stopped states from protecting their residents while offering nothing in return at the federal level," Jim Steyer, founder and CEO of children's advocacy group Common Sense Media, wrote in a statement. "In the end, 99 senators voted to strip the language out when just hours earlier it looked like the moratorium might have survived."

By MATT BROWN and MATT O'BRIEN, Associated Press. O'Brien reported from Providence, Rhode Island

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Why I will be voting for the Great Park on July 8th



Courtesy photo

DAN HALL

On July 8, I will be voting to move forward with the Great Park upon closure of the Santa Monica Airport—an open space plan that is Measure LC compliant, provides opportunities for recreation and the arts, and delivers on a promise I made to voters.

Not because it's politically convenient—in fact, I suspect I may lose key supporters in my coalition. Not because I hope to win over organizations or people who actively fight our agenda in some Pollyanna dream—I know I won't.

It's because I said I would. It's that simple.

In public life, we often talk about trust—about restoring faith in government, about transparency, about accountability. But trust isn't built through speeches or social media posts. It's built through action. It's built by keeping your word, even when it would be easier not to.

I support a Great Park because one day, 100 years from now, the LA region will be more dense. Our great-grandchildren deserve open, green space too and will be grateful we preserved this land. Transparently, I've always stated I support additional, small-scale commercial uses like cafes, beer gardens, and an outdoor concert amphitheater like the Greek, Santa Barbara Bowl, or Rady Shell. These would enhance the visitor and resident experience, increase public safety, and financially support the park's creation and upkeep. I hope we continue to explore these revenue generating options when the airport closes.

Santa Monica needs housing. Period. LA and California are far too expensive because the rent is too damn high. Home ownership? It's out of the question for many, including me.

I've proudly supported the most ambitious pro-housing Council agenda in decades. I voted for housing on Wilshire, in Downtown, at Bergamot, and at the Airport business park–across every income bracket, from permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless to senior housing to market rate with inclusionary requirements.

I fought for the endorsement of SB79 to upzone along the E Line metro to allow for transit-oriented development and reduce vehicle pollution. I co-sponsored the motion to remove owner-occupancy requirements which restrict townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes—the missing middle housing we so desperately need in this city to complement our robust affordable housing program.

I voted to protect forty rent-controlled families in the Pico Neighborhood by investing millions to rehabilitate their building. I co-sponsored the creation of a rental registry to protect consumers, the ban on algorithmic price setting for rents, and voted to approve the most robust package of renter protections—a right to legal counsel and emergency cash assistance for rent—since the City's adoption of rent control.

I supported loosening off-site inclusionary restrictions so we get more of it, and last week in the budget, I insisted we begin repayment of the Housing Trust Fund–raided during COVID to keep the City afloat.

For me, July 8th isn't a vote about housing policy or green space. It's about my integrity. During the campaign—in endorsement questionnaires and interviews at the Santa Monica Democratic Club, SMRR, and Santa Monica Forward, at thousands of doors, in my campaign messaging, and at multiple candidate forums, I committed to an LC compliant vision when the airport closes. I won their endorsements and your votes because of (or perhaps despite) this position.

We will build more affordable housing—more than ever before. Just not on the airport.

There, I choose to build a park.

Because I said I would.

Dan Hall is a Santa Monica City Councilmember, elected in 2024. You can reach him at dan.hall@santamonica.gov or on social media @electdanhall.



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **69.3**

WEDNESDAY
FAIR
SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

Surf edging up as new SSW swell creeps in, most size shows late. Light southerly wind due in the AM Old swell mix for mainly waist high waves in the morning. Long-period forerunners of a fresh SSW swell gradually nudge up the surf in the afternoon. Light S winds early morning, shifting to moderate SW onshores for the afternoon.

THURSDAY
FAIR TO GOOD
SURF: 3-4ft+
Waist to shoulder

Return to quality SSW swell across Northern LA County. Still enough NW windswell to help shape. Good looking low that initially slid out from under New Zealand put down good numbers over the central SPAC and sets up another fun run of SSW swell for the back half of the week. Size starts in the waist-chest high range and nudges in to the chest-shoulder occ. head high range through the end of the day. Surf is due to peak on the 4th and hold into the holiday weekend. More info — Incoming: SoCal Celebrates Independence Day With Fun SSW Swell.

Weather

Wednesday: Cloudy through mid morning, then gradual clearing, with a high near 69.
Wednesday Night: Increasing clouds, with a low around 61. West southwest wind 10 to 15 mph becoming light south in the evening.
Thursday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 69.
Thursday Night: Patchy fog after 11pm. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 61.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2025/07/02	Wed	02:53 AM	3.50	H
2025/07/02	Wed	09:14 AM	1.33	L
2025/07/02	Wed	4:28 PM	4.59	H
2025/07/02	Wed	11:24 PM	1.98	L
2025/07/03	Thu	04:31 AM	3.00	H
2025/07/03	Thu	09:56 AM	1.85	L
2025/07/03	Thu	5:10 PM	4.79	H
2025/07/04	Fri	12:36 AM	1.44	L
2025/07/04	Fri	06:22 AM	2.83	H
2025/07/04	Fri	10:43 AM	2.27	L
2025/07/04	Fri	5:49 PM	5.02	H
2025/07/05	Sat	01:29 AM	0.89	L
2025/07/05	Sat	07:58 AM	2.96	H

Daily Lottery

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 6/30
13 28 44 52 55
Power#: 6
Jackpot: 174 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 6/27
18 21 29 42 50
Mega#: 2
Jackpot: 50 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 6/28
3 16 27 30 33
Mega#: 13
Jackpot: 21 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 6/30
4 18 22 34 36

Daily 3
Draw Date: 6/30
EVENING: 4 3 0
Draw Date: 6/30
MIDDAY: 3 2 2

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 6/30
1st: 03 - Hot Shot
2nd: 01 - Gold Rush
3rd: 07 - Eureka
Race Time: 1:44.44

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City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: **An Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Santa Monica Extending and Amending Regulations Established by Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance 2816 (CCS) to Permit the Establishment of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as Part of Projects Utilizing Senate Bill (SB) 1123 on Vacant Parcels Zoned for Single-Unit Residential, Ensure Project Feasibility of SB 1123 Projects by Providing for Certain Relaxed Development Standards, and Expand the Establishment of ADUs to All Projects Utilizing Government Code Sections 65852.28 and 66499.41 Which Includes Parcels Within Multiple-Unit Zoning District as Permitted Pursuant to SB 684.**

A public hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Santa Monica to extend Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance ("EIZO") Number 2816 (CCS) permitting the establishment of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as part of projects utilizing Senate Bill (SB) 1123 (codified as Government Code Sections 65852.28 and 66499.41) on vacant parcels zoned for single-unit residential. Additionally, to ensure feasibility of SB 1123 projects, the following amendments to the EIZO are proposed: (1) elimination of Affordable Housing Production Program (AHPP) fees for projects of 5 units or less and (2) modification of development standards to include a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 1.5, maximum building height of 3 stories/33 feet, 30% front setback reduction (but no less than 10 feet), elimination of upper-story stepbacks, and elimination of interior setbacks and stepbacks between ADUs on newly created parcels except as required by the California Building Code (CBC). Additionally, further amendments are proposed to permit the establishment of ADUs in all projects that utilize Government Code Sections 65852.28 and 66499.41, which includes parcels within multiple-unit zoning districts as permitted pursuant to SB 684. The Council adopted Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2816 (CCS) on June 10, 2025 and provided direction on additional amendments as described above. The EIZO will expire unless extended by Council in accordance with Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 9.46.090(C).

DATE/TIME: **TUESDAY, JULY 29, 2025 AT 5:30 PM**

LOCATION: City Council Chamber, Second Floor, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT:
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Members of the public unable to attend a meeting but wishing to comment on an item(s) listed on the agenda may submit written comments prior to the public hearing via email to councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov or via mail to City Clerk, 1685 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, California 90401. Written public comment submitted before 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be available for online viewing. All written comments shall be made part of the public record. Please note the agenda item number in the subject line of your written comments.

You may also comment in person at the City Council hearing. Please check the agenda for more detailed instructions on how to comment in person.

Address your comments to: City Clerk
Re: SB 1123 Emergency IZO

VIA EMAIL: councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov
VIA MAIL: 1685 Main Street, Room 102
Santa Monica, CA 90401

MORE INFORMATION: If you want more information about this project, please contact Ross Fehrman by e-mail at ross.fehrman@santamonica.gov . For disability-related accommodations, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (310) 458-8211 or (310) 917-6626 TDD at least 72 hours in advance. Every attempt will be made to provide the requested accommodation. All written materials are available in alternate format upon request. Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Lines serve City Hall and the Civic Center area. The Expo Line terminus is located at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, and is a short walk to City Hall. Public parking is available in front of City Hall, on Olympic Drive, and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the public hearing.

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si desea más información, favor de llamar a Ana Fernandez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-2201 ext. 2431 o envíe un correo electrónico a ana.fernandez@santamonica.gov

GET IT DAILY...

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Community Column

Dear beloved community members,

This summer, one question continues to guide our work: how do we envision the future of Los Angeles County—and how do we build it together?

In June, we held our second annual LA County Water Resiliency Summit, bringing together leaders from across all 88 cities to advance sustainable, climate-resilient infrastructure. As climate impacts grow more severe, our work to secure clean, reliable water for every community must meet the moment.

That same week, I joined our Blue Ribbon Commission, in partnership with UCLA, to release the final recommendations for a stronger, safer fire recovery. Their top priority—creating a Resilient Rebuilding Authority—is now underway, following my motion at the Board of Supervisors. With this new model, we can streamline recovery and protect residents from future climate-driven disasters.

We also celebrated the full restoration of close to $20 million in federal HIV prevention funding. This win belongs to our LGBTQ+ community advocates, healthcare leaders, and service providers who never stopped fighting for what's right.

This month also marked a major step forward in our homelessness response. I was proud to welcome local leaders to the County's new Emergency Centralized Response Center—a new model for coordinated outreach, housing, and care. The scale and speed of this work is unmatched, and it is already making a difference. To learn more about the County's new Department of Homeless Services and Housing, visit ceo.lacounty.gov/dh.

Amid these victories, we must also confront hard truths. ICE raids have resumed across the San Fernando Valley, Hollywood, and beyond—terrorizing working families and immigrant communities. Let me be clear: there is no place for ICE raids in LA County. My office stands shoulder to shoulder with our immigrant neighbors. You belong here, and we will continue fighting for your safety and dignity. Please visit the Office of Immigrant Affairs for multilingual Know Your Rights resources.

As we look ahead to July, I encourage you to take part in the opportunities happening throughout the Third District:

Audition for the LA County Holiday Celebration – Apply by July 18

The Governance Reform Task Force was established as part of the reforms set forth in Measure G to oversee the implementation of the voter-approved Charter amendment while promoting transparency, accountability, and public engagement. There will be two meetings in July – meeting agendas and links to the hybrid meetings can be found on their website at measureg.lacounty.gov/.

Seasonal public pools are open with expanded swim hours, learn-to-swim programs, and family recreation. Follow @lacountyaquatics for schedules and updates.

As always, my office is here to serve. For the latest on recovery, resources, and how to get involved, sign up for our newsletter at lindseyhorvath.lacounty.gov, and follow us on social media at @lindseyphorvath.

We're building the future together—and I'm so grateful to be in this work with you.

With gratitude, Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor, Third District

From Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Pier

Pacific Wheel to Display Animated American Flag for Fourth of July

The world's only solar-powered Ferris wheel will transform into a 90-foot-tall animated American flag as Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier celebrates Independence Day with a weeklong patriotic light show.

The Pacific Wheel will glow red, white and blue through Sunday, July 6, joining other Southern California landmarks in tribute to the holiday. The light display will run from sunset (approximately 8:09 p.m.) to 12:30 a.m. each night.

The nine-story Ferris wheel features 174,000 LED lights mounted on 40 spokes and two hubs, capable of producing 16.7 million color combinations for dynamic, computer-generated lighting entertainment. The eco-friendly LED system provides 81 percent greater energy savings compared to traditional incandescent bulbs used on most Ferris wheels.

Located at 380 Santa Monica Pier, the Pacific Wheel lifts riders more than 130 feet above the Pacific Ocean, offering panoramic views of the Southern California coastline from the internationally popular pier.

Independence Day commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, when the Continental Congress declared that the 13 American colonies were no longer subject to British rule and had become united, free and independent states. The holiday is traditionally celebrated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, beach picnics and civic ceremonies.

Pacific Park is Los Angeles' only admission-free amusement park, featuring 12 rides, 14 midway games, five food vendors in Snackville and seaside retail shopping. The park's prices and operating hours are subject to change.

For more information and current operating hours, visit pacpark.com, Facebook.com/pacificpark, Instagram.com/pacpark or X.com/pacpark, or call 310-260-8744.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



OPINION | UNMUTED

Devan Sipher

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

While you were likely sleeping...

Late in the evening on June 24, the City Council passed the biennial budget for 2025-2027. A few weeks ago, I praised the budget proposal put forward by Councilmembers Jesse Zwick, Caroline Torosis and Dan Hall. I didn't praise it because I liked it. How can anyone like drastic reductions to city services? I praised it because of the leadership exhibited by the three Councilmembers championing unpopular cuts, which resulted in almost a 10% decrease in proposed deficit spending. You might think the Councilmembers would be taking a bit of a victory lap. If so, you would be mistaken. All three Councilmembers voted against the budget.

If you're feeling whiplash trying to comprehend this abrupt and somewhat irresponsible reversal, I should point out that it seemed to be a vote of conscience for them. They were taking a moral stand against an amendment they disapproved of, and we should know by now that we're living at a time when compromise is a dirty word.

The contested amendment restored previously eliminated funding for the seven neighborhood organizations (Friends of Sunset Park, North of Montana Association, Santa Monica Northeast Neighbors, Ocean Park Association, Pico Neighborhood Association, Santa Monica Mid-City Neighbors, and Wilshire/Montana Neighborhood Coalition). Councilmembers Ellis Raskin and Natalya Zernitskaya requested that $7,000 grants be reinstated using savings from downsizing in the staffing of the police department.

On one hand, it's deeply objectionable to transfer money to these groups that was earmarked from Measures K and PSK for public safety, voters' number one priority. But on the other hand, it's a bit of a three-card monte game identifying which city dollars come from which source.

Councilmember Hall had a different objection. He said it was "disgusting" to give taxpayer money to organizations that make political endorsements. While his language was harsh, he made a compelling point that Torosis and Zwick supported. However, it should be noted that several of the neighborhood organizations endorsed the opposing slate in the 2024 elections. So is this a case of moral outrage or political payback?

Regardless, it's hard to argue for using public funds to subsidize partisan groups. The other four Councilmembers didn't attempt to do so. But after giving lip service to the principles of clean government, they voted for awarding the grants with the sole caveat that none of the money could be designated for political purposes, choosing the "high" moral ground of "see no evil, hear no evil."

I would like to give Hall, Torosis and Zwick credit for taking a stand against political backscratching, but the neighborhood organizations also provide many beneficial, nonpolitical services. And, oddly, the only organization allocated funding in the three Councilmembers' budget proposal was the Early Childhood Task Force, which happens to be run by former Mayor Gleam Davis.

Santa Monica is a small city with a disproportionately large amount of political machinations. At a time of precarious municipal finances, it's disheartening to recognize the amount of control wielded by behind-the-scenes power players, some of whom have altruistic intentions and some less so. But the advantage of being such a small city is that each citizen has an extraordinary opportunity to make a difference. It doesn't take many people to impact policy choices here, and it shouldn't be only the loudest or the most politically connected. It should be you.

So wake up Santa Monica, and, even more important since you're reading a newspaper, wake up your friends and relatives. Encourage them to pay attention to what's going on. Democracy is being threatened not only by cynicism in our nation's capital but by apathy in our living rooms. Transparency in government requires shining a light on what our leaders do in the middle of the night, but it also requires voters taking the time to look. Do I believe our Councilmembers are corrupt? No, I don't. Do I believe they have nefarious intentions? Absolutely not. But do I believe that we can expect more of them and of ourselves? Yes, we can.

Devan Sipher can be reached at Unmuted.SMDP@gmail.com

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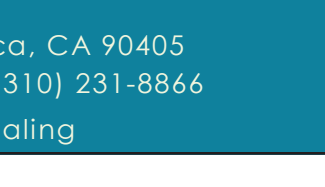
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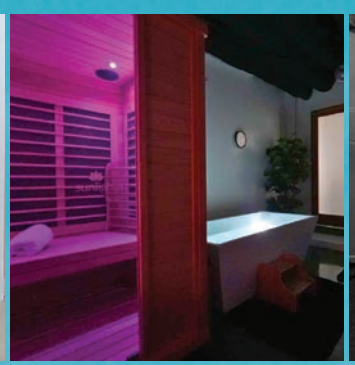
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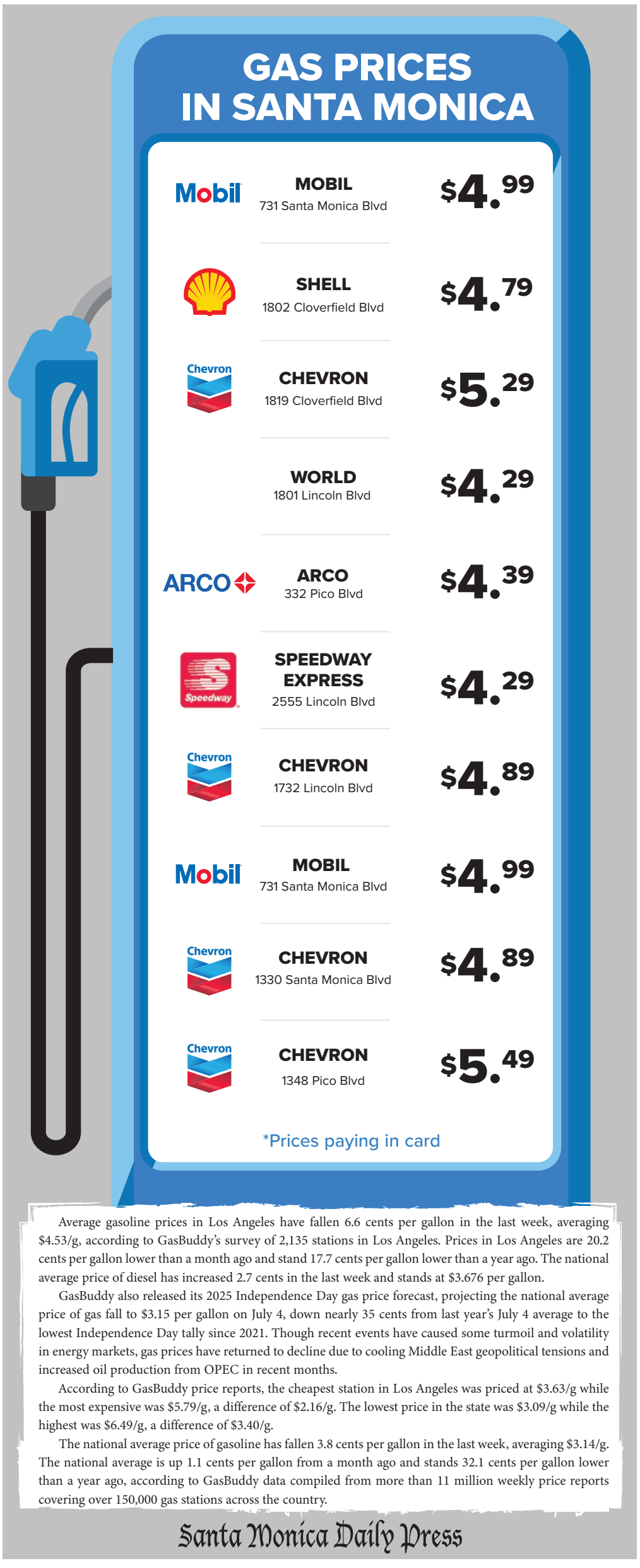

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Average gasoline prices in Los Angeles have fallen 6.6 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging $4.53/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 2,135 stations in Los Angeles. Prices in Los Angeles are 20.2 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 17.7 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 2.7 cents in the last week and stands at $3.676 per gallon.

GasBuddy also released its 2025 Independence Day gas price forecast, projecting the national average price of gas fall to $3.15 per gallon on July 4, down nearly 35 cents from last year's July 4 average to the lowest Independence Day tally since 2021. Though recent events have caused some turmoil and volatility in energy markets, gas prices have returned to decline due to cooling Middle East geopolitical tensions and increased oil production from OPEC in recent months.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Los Angeles was priced at $3.63/g while the most expensive was $5.79/g, a difference of $2.16/g. The lowest price in the state was $3.09/g while the highest was $6.49/g, a difference of $3.40/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 3.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging $3.14/g. The national average is up 1.1 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 32.1 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Santa Monica Daily Press

COMMUNITY NEWS

SMC

SMC Planetarium Offers Three Free Virtual Shows in July

The Santa Monica College Planetarium will present three free virtual shows in July, exploring space imagery, NASA technology and exoplanets.

The Friday evening programs begin at 8 p.m. and are preceded by a virtual Night Sky Show at 7 p.m. featuring astronomy and space exploration news. Viewers can interact with planetarium lecturers and ask questions during the presentations.

Shows are conducted via Zoom while the new SMC Planetarium and Observatory completes construction. Participants must install Zoom software, available for free download at zoom.com. Registration is available at smc.edu/planetarium.

The July schedule includes:

July 11: "Vera Rubin: First Light" features lecturer Sarah Vincent discussing the first images from the world's largest digital camera as the Vera Rubin Observatory begins scanning the universe.

July 18: "NASA Spinoffs" examines how technological advances developed to protect astronauts — from Apollo missions to the International Space Station — benefit Earth-bound humans in everyday applications.

July 25: "Deep Sky Deep Dive: Understanding Exoplanets" explores planets beyond Earth's solar system. The first exoplanet was confirmed in 1992, and missions like Kepler and TESS have since confirmed more than 5,000 exoplanets.

All programs are free and accessible through smc.edu/planetarium. Additional information is available online at smc.edu/planetarium or by calling 310-434-3005.

Shows are subject to change or cancellation without notice.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

Los Angeles

Zbur Condemns Supreme Court Ruling on School Curriculum

Democratic Caucus Chair and Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur (D-Hollywood) issued a statement criticizing the U.S. Supreme Court's 6-3 decision in Mahmoud v. Taylor, which grants parents broad authority to opt their children out of public school curriculum, including content designed to reflect the diversity of American society.

"The Supreme Court's ruling that parents of public school students can opt their children out of lessons acknowledging the existence of LGBTQ+ people is dangerous and cruel," Zbur said. "We know that welcoming, affirming, and inclusive public schools give all students the opportunity to learn and succeed."

The assemblymember said the ruling sends a harmful message to LGBTQ+ youth, who already face higher rates of bullying, harassment and discrimination.

"Unfortunately, this ruling sends a message to LGBTQ+ youth that they do not belong," Zbur said.

Zbur emphasized that the court's decision would not change reality for LGBTQ+ people.

"LGBTQ+ people exist today and throughout history, regardless of the Court's ruling," he said. "Our stories deserve to be told. And we will never stop fighting for a world that embraces our community."

Zbur serves as a member of the California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus and previously worked as executive director of Equality California, the state's largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization.

The Supreme Court's decision allows parents to remove their children from classroom discussions and materials that address LGBTQ+ topics and other content reflecting American diversity.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

Countywide

County Launches New Dispatch Center for Homeless Services

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair Kathryn Barger announced the launch of a new publicly accessible Emergency Centralized Response Center designed to coordinate services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

The dispatch center, created through a motion co-authored by Barger, allows residents to report unsheltered individuals who need support and connects them to available services.

"Today marks a significant step forward in our collective work to mitigate the homelessness crisis in Los Angeles County," Barger said in a statement. "The public can now activate a powerful resource and tool to help a neighbor experiencing homelessness."

The center represents what Barger described as a shift toward shared social responsibility in addressing homelessness. Rather than residents simply observing or ignoring the situation, the new system empowers them to take action by reporting individuals who need assistance.

"It's a meaningful way each of us can contribute to a more compassionate and coordinated response," Barger said.

The Emergency Centralized Response Center is designed to quickly connect reports to comprehensive services for people experiencing homelessness. Each submission will be routed to appropriate holistic services based on individual needs.

Barger emphasized that the dispatch center represents just one component of the county's broader strategy to reduce homelessness and stressed the importance of measuring its effectiveness.

"The work ahead remains immense," she said. "This dispatch center is a crucial part of our County's strategy to reduce homelessness, and performance matters."

The supervisors chair committed to ongoing oversight of the program, promising to monitor the center's operations to ensure accountability, transparency and effectiveness.

The launch comes as Los Angeles County continues to grapple with a persistent homelessness crisis that has drawn national attention. The new dispatch system aims to streamline the process of connecting individuals with services while engaging the broader community in solution efforts.

Officials have not yet released specific details about how residents can access the dispatch center or what types of reports will be prioritized.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

COMMUNITY NEWS

SMC

SMC's Emeritus Players to Present Free Online Summer Showcase

Santa Monica College's Emeritus Players Acting Troupe will present its Summer 2025 Showcase, "Conversations: Scenes from Film and Theater," as a free live virtual event Saturday, July 12, at 1 p.m.

The online performance will feature students from SMC's Emeritus acting classes presenting scenes described as silly, serious and quirky that inspire, entertain and offer something to think about.

"The Emeritus Players, under the direction of Barbara Gannen, brings both veteran and rookie performers together for an entertaining stage presence," said Dr. Scott Silverman, SMC Noncredit and External Programs dean. "Please join us for an incredibly lively and delightful performance."

Viewers can access the live virtual event through a Zoom link posted at the July 12 event listing at smc.edu/events.

SMC's Emeritus program was founded by Santa Monica College in 1975 to serve the lifelong learning interests of older adults. The widely praised program offers more than 120 noncredit adult education classes and special programs that serve more than 3,000 students annually.

More information is available at smc.edu/emeritus or by calling 310-434-4306. The event is subject to change or cancellation without notice.

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CONTAMINATION

FROM PAGE 1

exceeding federal drinking water safety limits by substantial margins, according to research released by Waterkeeper Alliance.

In the Santa Ana River, PFAS concentrations downstream from Riverside's wastewater treatment plant reached levels that exceeded federal safety standards for drinking water. The contamination included PFOA at 13 parts per trillion (ppt) and PFOS at 12 ppt in one sampling period — more than three times and two times the federal maximum contaminant levels of 4 ppt, respectively.

"This study provides the information necessary for local, state, and federal leaders to take action and protect the health and safety of our communities here in Los Angeles and across the country," said Kelly Shannon McNeill, associate director of LA Waterkeeper.

The study, conducted in partnership with Hispanic Access Foundation, represents the first monitoring project to use passive sampling devices at wastewater treatment plant sites across multiple states. Researchers deployed specialized samplers for several weeks to capture time-integrated data that provides a clearer picture of long-term contamination.

PFAS, manufactured since the 1950s for use in products ranging from non-stick cookware to firefighting foam, do not break down naturally and accumulate in people, wildlife and the environment. Scientific studies increasingly link these chemicals to serious health conditions including cancer, liver and kidney disease, reproductive issues and immune system dysfunction.

The Los Angeles River showed PFAS increases downstream from the LA-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant, with total contamination rising by 6.01 ppt — an 8.61% increase. While some federally regulated PFAS decreased slightly at that location, concentrations of PFOA at 9.5 ppt and PFOS at 5.9 ppt still exceeded federal drinking water limits.

Both California rivers serve watersheds with significant populations. The Los Angeles River watershed spans 834 square miles with nearly 1 million residents living within one mile of the river. The Santa Ana River watershed covers 2,630 square miles across four counties.

The contamination particularly affects communities already facing environmental and health burdens. Near the Riverside facility, 80% of residents within one mile are people of color and 34% are low-income, according to EPA environmental justice data. Around the LA-Glendale plant, 54% are people of color and 39% are low-income.

Neither wastewater facility has limits on PFAS discharges in their Clean Water Act permits, despite receiving wastewater from numerous industrial users. EPA databases identify dozens of facilities in both cities that operate in sectors potentially handling or releasing PFAS chemicals, including electronics, metal coating, chemical manufacturing and textile operations.

The study found that 95% of downstream wastewater treatment plant sampling sites nationwide had elevated PFAS concentrations, while 98% of all surface waters tested contained one or more types of these chemicals. Only one facility across all sites studied had PFAS limits in its discharge permit.

California has established some of the nation's strongest PFAS protections, including Public Health Goals more stringent than federal standards and notification levels for certain chemicals. The state has also banned PFAS in food packaging and products for infants and children.

However, the new data shows contamination levels exceeding even California's protective standards. In the Santa Ana River, PFOA concentrations surpassed the state's Public Health Goal of 0.007 ppt by nearly 13 ppt in one sample, while PFOS exceeded the state goal of 1 ppt by 11 ppt.

Environmental advocates say the findings demonstrate the urgent need for stronger federal regulation of industrial sources and upgrades to wastewater treatment systems.

Current federal law does not require industries to limit PFAS discharges to treatment plants, and conventional wastewater technology cannot remove these persistent chemicals. As a result, PFAS pass through treatment systems and accumulate in both discharged water and sewage sludge used as fertilizer on agricultural land.

The research comes as the Environmental Protection Agency faces criticism for proposing to weaken some federal PFAS drinking water standards established in 2024. The agency has not yet established surface water quality criteria for most PFAS compounds or limits on their disposal in biosolids.

maaz@smdp.com





CEQA

FROM PAGE 1

a separate bill in March. "This isn't going to solve all of our housing problems in the state, but it is going to remove the single biggest impediment to building environmentally friendly housing."

Unlike most environmental laws, which explicitly mandate, monitor or ban certain environmental behavior, CEQA is just a public disclosure requirement. The 54-year-old statute requires state and local governments to study and publicize the likely environmental impact of any decisions they make. That includes the permitting of new housing.

But for years, the building industry and "Yes in my backyard" activists have identified the law as a key culprit behind California's housing shortage. That's because the law allows any individual or group to sue if they argue that a required environmental study isn't accurate, expansive or detailed enough. Such lawsuits — and even the mere threat of them —add a degree of delay, cost and uncertainty that make it impossible for the state to build its way to affordability, CEQA's critics argue.

With today's vote, the Legislature will be putting that argument to the test. Gov. Gavin Newsom, who spent much of last week cajoling the Legislature to pass the bill as part of his budget package, is all but certain to sign it.

Now the question is whether this monumental political and policy shift will actually result in more homes getting built in California's cities.

Many of the bill's backers are optimistic.

"I think when we look back on what hopefully is California finally beginning to confront this housing crisis, this year — 2025 — and this bill will be viewed as a turning point," said Matt Haney, a Democrat who represents San Francisco in the Assembly where he chairs the housing committee.

On paper, the new law, unlike most that deal with housing approvals and environmental regulation, is actually pretty straightforward.

Urban "infill" housing developments — housing built in and around existing development — are no longer subject to CEQA.

There are some exceptions and qualifiers, but development boosters say they are relatively minor.

The exemption is"the most significant change to the California Environmental Quality Act's effect on housing production since CEQA was passed," said Louis Mirante, a lobbyist for the Bay Area Council, a business coalition that regularly pushes for legislation that makes it easier to build.

The bill is limited to projects under 20 acres, but that cap is only relevant to the biggest multi-block-spanning mega developments.

A certain level of density is required, but it really only precludes using the policy for single-family home construction.

Before any project can move forward, any affiliated tribal government will have to be notified first, but the consultation is put on a short timeline.

In order to qualify for the exemption, a proposed project must also be consistent with local zoning, the regulations that determine what types of buildings can be constructed where. But thanks to another CEQA-chopping bill authored by San Francisco Democratic Sen. Scott Wiener that exempts many changes to zoning rules from CEQA and which is also packed into the budget, that appears less likely to be a real constraint.

To buy off the ferocious opposition of the State Building and Construction Trades Council of California, a construction union umbrella group, the bill also includes some higher wage requirements.

But those rules are not likely to apply to most potential residential development projects. "The lion share of housing being built" in California will no longer be governed by CEQA, said Mark Rhoades, a planning and development consultant in Berkeley.

Take a massive five-story apartment building spanning a full city block, said Bill Fulton, a longtime urban planner and professor at UC San Diego.



Photo by Samantha Norris, CalMatters

BUILDING: Construction of what will be one of the largest mass timber towers in the world at 1510 Webster St. in downtown Oakland on Aug 7, 2023. Of the 222 units 35 are designated affordable housing for households earning around 80% of the Area Median Income.

"You don't have to worry about labor and you don't have to worry about CEQA? That's a big deal," he said.

CEQA SEACHANGE

What a difference nine years make.

Consider how things went back in 2016 when then-Gov. Jerry Brown tried to ram a CEQA fix for California's rising housing costs through the state budget process. Brown's big idea was to "streamline" the housing approval process, allowing developers to make an end-run around the California Environmental Quality Act, so long as they set aside a certain share of units for lower-income residents.

A coalition of construction labor unions, environmental interests and local government groups torched the idea. The proposal didn't even get a vote.

Nearly a decade later, once again a Democratic governor opted to stuff a CEQA-trimming policy package through the budget process in the name of cheaper housing.

The measure passed overwhelmingly in both the Senate and Assembly — and this time it didn't even include an affordability requirement.

Wicks' proposal is somewhat narrower than the 2016 version, exempting only infill. New suburban-style subdivisions carved from farmland or undeveloped sagebrush will not qualify.

That infill focus has made it easier for the Democratic-controlled Legislature to swallow such a significant scaling back of California's signature environmental law. Promoting denser urban development generally means using less land, constructing new housing that uses less energy and setting up new residents to do a lot less driving.

"When you are building housing in an existing community, that is environmentally beneficial, it is climate friendly, that is not something that should be subjected to potentially endless CEQA challenges and lawsuits," Wiener said on the Senate floor on Monday just prior to the vote, when the measure passed 28 to 5.

Even so, Wicks' proposal always looked like a long shot.

Since Brown's failed gambit, lawmakers have managed to pass a raft of bills giving housing developers an escape route around CEQA. But those laws have always contained a trade-off. Developers get to skip CEQA, but in exchange they have to pay state-set "prevailing wages" (which typically work out to union-level pay), hire union workers outright, set aside a certain share of units for lower income residents, or some combination of the three.

These conditions were born of political necessity. A CEQA lawsuit — or even the suggestion of one — makes for a powerful negotiating tool. Organized labor groups, mostly especially the building trades council, have not been keen to give up that leverage without getting something in return.

As housing developers proved less willing to use the new streamlining laws than those bills' sponsors and supporters had hoped, many pro-building advocates, academics and commentators began calling for environmental streamlining with no strings attached.

Wicks answered that call earlier this year. Under her proposal, infill developers would be allowed to ignore CEQA, full stop. That marked a major break from recent legislative precedent, and one that seemed a stretch, even with so many Democratic lawmakers carting around copies of Abundance.

THE DEAL THAT ALMOST WASN'T

Just last week, Wicks' proposal seemed on the verge of collapse.

A version of the bill introduced last week included what amounted to a minor wage hike for the lowest paid construction workers, who are virtually all non-union. While the state's carpenters' union supported it, the trades council emphatically did not — with one of the groups' associated lobbyists likening it to Jim Crow. The trades objected so strenuously — arguing that it set dangerous precedent and undercut apprenticeship programs — that lawmakers removed the proposed wage change.

Instead, developers working on projects that are entirely designated to be affordable would now be required to pay prevailing wages in order to take advantage of the new law.

Developers of any projects over 85 feet tall would be required to hire a certain share of union workers. There are added restrictions for construction in San Francisco specifically.

By the standards of prior housing streamlining bills, those are relatively modest concessions. Most developments over 85 feet use concrete and steel frame construction, which require a higher skilled labor force that is often unionized anyway.

Most entirely income-restricted housing projects make use of public subsidies that require paying union-level wages.

"Affordable housing is forced to play by different rules because the state has decided that if you are receiving public funds a certain wage should be attached to it," said Ray Pearl, executive director of the California Housing Consortium, which advocates for affordable housing construction. The addition of a prevailing wage requirement for affordable housing "is a head scratcher," he said. "But it really is reaffirming existing policy."

That leaves every other type of housing project: Market rate and mixed-income apartment buildings under seven-or-so stories. For that type of construction, which defines the bulk of urban development in California, CEQA is soon to be entirely optional — no string attached.

That this is the new trades-endorsed deal has been met with a perplexed kind of glee from some corners of the "yes in my backyard" movement. The new version of the bill "is now *even better;*" UC Davis law professor Chris Elmendorf marveled on Twitter.

WILL IT MATTER?

What will urban housing construction look like in California without CEQA?

There are no shortage of reasons not to build housing in California. Labor costs, even without regulatory requirements, are high. So are interest rates. Tariffs and aggressive immigration enforcement are more recent sources of uncertainty. Developers are always happy to complain about slow permitting, high local fees and inflexible building codes.

"It's not the CEQA costs that are holding up housing," said Rhoades, the Berkeley consultant.

"I don't think this is going to make more development happen," he said of the budget bill. "It's going to make development that is already happening a little easier."

Critics of the law can and do point to specific projects — housing for students, housing near public transit, affordable housing built upon city-owned parking lots — that have been sued in the name of the environment as examples of "CEQA abuse."

Under the new laws, such litigation will largely go away in California's cities.

"The one thing we do know is that CEQA is a time suck," said Ben Metcalf, managing director of UC Berkeley's Terner Center for Housing Innovation and the former head of the state's housing agency under Brown. "If you can just get out of that six months, nine months, twelfth months of delay, that takes a whole cohort of projects and gets them in the ground sooner. In a state that's facing a housing crisis, that's not for nothing."

But the more important consequence of CEQA, many of its critics regularly argue, has been its chilling effect.

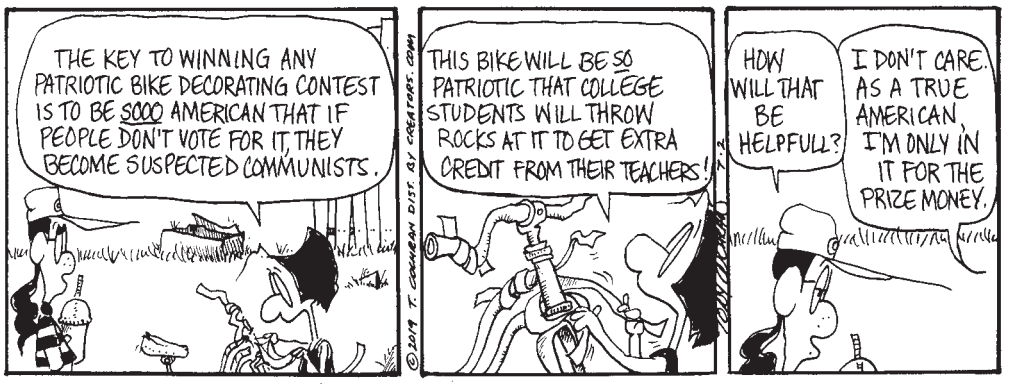
How many new units of housing would have been built, but for concerns that they might become ensnared in environmental litigation? How many developers, anticipating a possible legal challenge, have preemptively pared back their plans? How many financiers of housing projects pulled out or demanded higher interest rates over such concerns?

California may soon find out.

By Ben Christopher

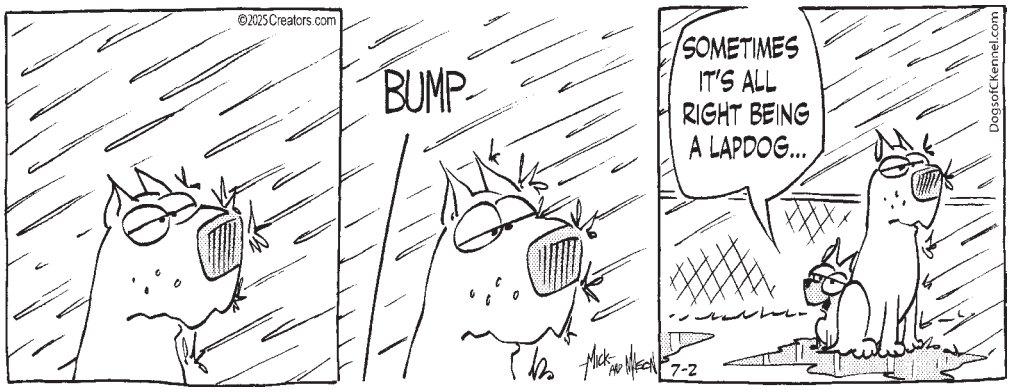
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



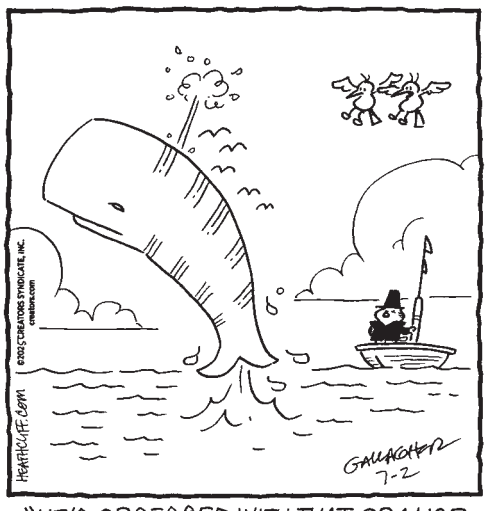
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

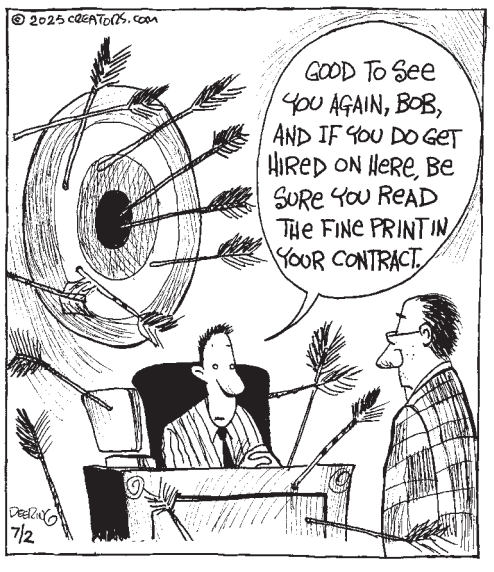
By PETER GALLAGHER



"HE'S OBSESSED WITH THAT ORANGE TABBY WHALE."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 24 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com 6624

Creepy crawlies

C I C A D A S W A L K B E E S
O T S H G E R G Y R E B P H T
G E I A N R A R E R O B I A O
A S S T A N T P O L L E N T N
M R O W T U C O U F O L I C E
I O H S R H E A D P T U H H F
H H P P A I N F U L N E S T L
C E R I P T E K C I R C E E Y
R H O R C A T E R P I L L A R
A P M H S B P Y E A R W I G O
N M A T E D N H S C A R A B A
O Y T A I O C G I M O T H B C
M N E O L M G M I D G E U S H
Y L M O F E V I H S S G R U B
F T C E M N G N I T S W A S P

Abdomen	Cutworm	Imago	Painful
Ants	Earwig	Legs	Pollen
Aphids	Eggs	Lice	Pupa
Bees	Flea	Louse	Roach
Bite	Flies	Metamorphosis	Scarab
Borer	Gnat	Midge	Sting
Bugs	Grub	Monarch	Stonefly
Caterpillar	Hatch	Moth	Thrip
Cicada	Head	Nectar	Trap
Colony	Hive	Nest	Walk
Cricket	Horse	Nymph	Wasp

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 2)

Purposefulness and effectiveness will be your hallmarks this year. You'll tackle whatever task life tosses you. Your style of work and care will take on just the shape that's most needed, be it solid, tender, impressive, comforting, tender or instructive. More highlights: You'll get to choose your company. Reciprocation and mutuality are the vibes you most often get. You'll be swept into a quest. Pisces and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 13, 1, 15, 20 and 50.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It's senseless to ask for permission in situations where no one is in charge. That would be like riding into the Wild West and asking to see the town ordinances. You'll magnetize opportunity by acting as if you already belong.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If something excites you, claim it. Don't try to impress — try to connect. If you can make someone feel like the most important person in the world while you're with them, you're operating at a high level of humanity.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Feelings, when accepted, tend to pass. When repressed or argued with, they linger and distort. Let it move through. Acknowledge it without judgment. Let the feeling exist and it won't bother you for long.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll thrive in the thrust of the challenge because you love the game. You're good at it. You have range. You can play with tone, break the rules, depart, fly and stick the landing. You're magnetic when you're in your zone.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're more emotionally fluent than most today. You'll sense the feeling under the conversation — the thing no one's naming. What should you do with the information? Let it guide your tone, not your agenda, and the rest will come to you along the way.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've seen enough to know that weird can be wonderful. Something that doesn't make sense at first will turn out to be exactly right. Trust your fascination. It comes from a part of you that is guided by forces beyond logic.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are those who want you to do things the same way they would, but that's not going to work. Be polite, be blithe and be moving right along. Even if you're not sure where you're going, you'll get there in your own way. Keep walking.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There are those who act nice because they have excellent manners, or because it's the most expedient way to carry out business. You act nice because you are nice. Everyone feels it and wants to be around you because of it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Your emotional frequency — your style of thinking, feeling, creating — isn't common, but there are still plenty of others out there on a similar wavelength. Hold out for the kind of belonging that doesn't require shrinking or explaining, just recognizing.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). An urge to declutter is about more than the stuff. You're clearing space to think, breathe, feel — and be bored for a second, too, which is part of it. Boredom can be fertile. In a wide-open moment, new ideas will float in.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Dealing with anxiety head-on probably won't make it go away. You're well-aware that the internal dialogue is just thoughts, but they live in your body and can be released through movement. Today, you can effectively walk/run/hug/dance it off.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). "Let's proceed with mischief," said an anonymous fairy in Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Today, it might mean doing one thing out loud that you'd usually keep private. A bold compliment. A strange idea. A confession. Pick someone fun to deliver it to.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

I	P	O	D	S	■	O	S	H	A	■	A	K	I	N
R	O	B	I	N	■	S	E	E	M	■	S	A	N	D
I	N	S	T	A	N	T	R	E	P	L	A	Y	■	■
■	■	■	S	P	A	■	■	S	E	A	■	■	■	■
S	R	S	■	S	I	L	V	E	R	M	E	D	A	L
H	A	N	■	■	L	E	O	■	■	B	L	A	D	E
A	D	A	M	■	S	T	U	M	P	■	F	L	E	A
R	I	F	L	E	■	■	C	O	O	■	■	A	P	P
D	O	U	B	L	E	C	H	E	C	K	■	I	T	S
■	■	■	■	E	R	A	■	■	U	N	I	■	■	■
■	■	V	I	C	E	P	R	E	S	I	D	E	N	T
H	A	I	R	■	C	L	E	O	■	T	O	R	A	H
A	L	S	O	■	T	E	E	N	■	S	L	I	D	E
S	E	E	N	■	S	T	D	S	■	■	S	C	A	M

Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

3	2	1	6	5	9	7	4	8
7	4	5	3	8	1	9	6	2
9	8	6	7	2	4	5	3	1
1	5	2	9	6	3	4	8	7
4	7	3	2	1	8	6	5	9
8	6	9	5	4	7	2	1	3
5	9	8	1	7	6	3	2	4
2	1	7	4	3	5	8	9	6
6	3	4	8	9	2	1	7	5

		6				8		
8			4	1	6		9	
9				2		3		4
	8				4		1	
		1		7		4		
	7		8				3	
1		5		4				9
	4		9	8	3			5
		8				2		

Newsday Crossword

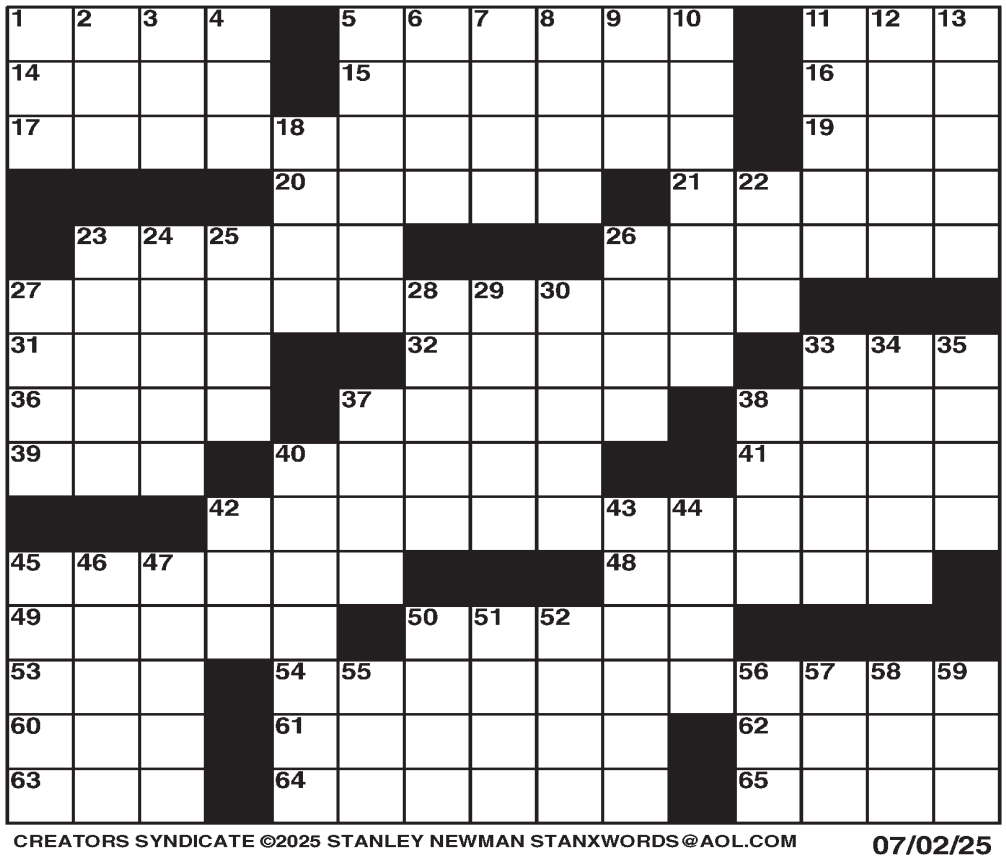
IN A HURRY by Mark McClain
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Veggie in gumbo
5 Greets informally
11 T-shirt size choice: Abbr.
14 Fictional Huckleberry
15 Tidy up
16 Part of a stocking
17 DVD player remote button
19 Comics barking sound
20 Literary twist
21 White heron
23 Backbone
26 Tangled up, as hair
27 Aspirin commercial promise
31 Ticker-__ parade
32 Baby girls of Spain
33 Half of a semicolon
36 Currier's printer partner
37 Pious
38 Prefix for phone or scope
39 According to
40 George of *Star Trek*
41 Winds down
42 Subway system
45 Famous folks
48 Lauder of cosmetics
49 George W. Bush successor
50 Darts around, as a hummingbird
53 Floor-washing tool
54 Defendant's Constitutional guarantee
60 Recent USNA grad
61 Treat for a pet feline
62 Not doing anything
63 Pumpernickel alternative
64 Very nervous
65 Sport played on ponies

DOWN

1 Away from work today
2 Korean automaker
3 MD's coworkers
4 Hill-building insect
5 Noisy sleeper
6 Prefix meaning "flying"
7 Betray that you're bored
8 Don't go yet
9 That woman
10 Uses a tab key
11 Drummer Ringo
12 Gourmet mushroom
13 Nickname for a southpaw
18 Disloyal informer
22 Oxygen or helium
23 Smooth-talking
24 Legendary "Pied" musician
25 Applies frosting to
26 Overwhelm with humor
27 Cotton swab brand
28 Japanese mushroom
29 Was in agreement (with)
30 Not illuminated
33 Tightly packed
34 Song sung at a class reunion
35 Try out
37 Disparities
38 Backpacker's shelter
40 Hot sauce brand
42 Sleep-stage acronym
43 Input again
44 Office aide: Abbr.
45 Person with great promise
46 Black hardwood
47 Minor slip
50 Fancy party
51 Provide for a time
52 "Gotcha!"
55 Stovetop fryer
56 Fabric tear
57 Wedding assertion
58 "__ the king's horses..."
59 Zodiac roarer



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MORE OF STAN'S CROSSWORDS! Play FREE from Stan's archives of Easy, Hard and Sunday puzzles at: tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords

COMMUNITY NEWS

Sacramento

Author Christine Pride to Celebrate Solo Debut Novel at Local Bookshop

Christine Pride will visit Santa Monica on July 10 to celebrate her solo debut novel "All the Men I've Loved Again," which goes on sale July 8.

The author will appear in conversation with Tembi Locke at Zibby's Bookshop for a special evening that will also support the United Negro College Fund (LA Chapter), with a portion of proceeds donated to the organization.

"All the Men I've Loved Again" has been selected as a Most Anticipated Book of the Summer by People, Real Simple, theSkimm, TheGrio, the Root and other publications.

The novel follows Cora Belle, who arrives at college in 1999 ready to transform from a shy, sheltered girl into someone new. She unexpectedly falls for Lincoln, experiencing the rollercoaster of first love before a series of surprises, secrets and a shocking tragedy complicate her life. A new man, Aaron, enters the picture, creating further complications as Cora finds herself torn between two loves.

Twenty years later, an unexpected reconnection and chance encounter puts Cora back in the same position with the same two men, forcing her to confront everything she thought she knew about fate, love and herself.

Pride is the co-author of the Good Morning America Book Club Pick "We Are Not Like Them" and "You Were Always Mine."

Publishers Weekly praised the book, saying "The passionate love scenes and strong Black supporting cast will make this a hit with fans of Jasmine Guillory and Tia Williams."

Bestselling author Tia Williams called it "the ultimate" second-chance romance, writing, "Pride weaves a deliciously twisty, heartwarming story that spans decades, tempts fate, and is wildly relatable to anyone who's ever found themselves lost in 'it's complicated' love."

Annabel Monaghan, bestselling author of "Nora Goes Off Script," described it as "a fascinating exploration of love, fate and personal agency" and "a second chance romance to devour in one gulp."

The book explores themes of coming-of-age, second chances and self-discovery through what publishers describe as a "big-hearted" story for anyone who has wondered "what if" about a past love.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

RENTAL

FROM PAGE 1

of these victims, and also to ensure that we have fair pricing in our city. So I just, I wanted to say thank you to the city attorney's office."

The ordinance specifically targets software like RealPage's YieldStar, which uses proprietary algorithms to recommend rent prices and occupancy levels for landlords based on confidential data from competing properties. City officials argue such systems amount to high-tech price fixing that drives up rents across local markets.

The ordinance allows tenants to use algorithmic pricing violations as an affirmative defense in eviction proceedings and permits civil enforcement actions by affected renters or the city.

According to the White House Council of Economic Advisors, algorithmic rental pricing software costs tenants whose landlords use the technology $70 per month on average nationally, and $34 per month in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The council also found that even tenants of landlords who don't use the software face higher rents as demand increases for their lower-priced units.

Santa Monica's action comes amid a broader national reckoning with algorithmic pricing tools. The city joins San Francisco, Philadelphia, Berkeley and Minneapolis in banning the technology, with other major cities including San Diego and Seattle moving forward with similar prohibitions.

The local ban also coincides with escalating federal litigation against the rental software industry. In January, the U.S. Department of Justice filed an expanded antitrust lawsuit against RealPage, joined by California Attorney General Rob Bonta and other state officials. The complaint alleges that RealPage and participating property companies orchestrated a "pricing alignment scheme" that artificially raised rents and maintained minimum price floors in violation of federal law.

The Santa Monica ordinance defines prohibited "algorithmic devices" as software that uses competitor data to advise landlords on rent pricing or whether to leave units vacant. Violations carry penalties of $1,000 per offense or actual damages, whichever is greater, plus attorney fees.

However, the ban faces opposition from industry groups. The California Apartment Association argued in a letter to the council that the ordinance is "premature" and "overbroad," calling for more study before enacting restrictions on emerging technologies.

"More work is needed to clearly define what constitutes 'algorithmic pricing software,'" Fred Sutton, the association's senior vice president of public affairs, wrote. "These technologies are not the source of the region's housing crises, but rather the lack of supply and an overly regulated environment is."

More than 35 class-action lawsuits have been filed nationwide related to algorithmic rental pricing software, targeting both software providers and landlords who use the systems.

editor@smdp.com

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WEDNESDAY | JULY 2

FRIENDS OF VENICE LIBRARY: YOGA FOR EVERYONE!
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Venice Branch Library 501 S Venice Blvd. Venice. Through body awareness, movement, and breath, you will be guided on how to bring your body, mind, and spirit back into balance for overall well-being. All levels are welcome. Generously funded by the Friends of Venice Library. For ADA accommodations, call (213) 228-7430 at least 72 hours prior to the event. Para ajustes razonables según la ley de ADA, llama al (213) 228-7430 al menos 72 horas antes del evento. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/friends-of-venice-library-yoga-for-everyone-/14548476/2025-07-02T12

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SINGIN' AND WINGIN
9:00 p.m. - 11:55 p.m. Tavern on Main 2907 Main St Santa Monica. Wednesdays are made for chicken wings and belting out your favorite songs! Join us for a fun filled evening of Karaoke, hosted by none other than Karaoke Star! $0.50 wings special all day long - 7 flavors to choose from Happy Hour from 4p-6p. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/wednesday-night-singin-and-wingin/14639011/2025-07-02T21

THURSDAY | JULY 3

LUNCHTIME LINE DANCE
12:30 p.m. Venice - Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library 501 S. Venice Boulevard Venice. Get fit and meet new friends learning line dances on your lunch break. We will learn new and old dances to various styles, including country, disco, Latin, soul, and more. All levels are welcome. For ADA accommodations, call (213) 228-7430 at least 72 hours prior to the event. Para ajustes razonables según la ley de ADA, llama al (213) 228-7430 al menos 72 horas antes del evento. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/lunchtime-line-dance/12342961/2025-07-03T12

FRIDAY | JULY 4

DRUNK THEATRE: THE WILDEST IMPROV COMEDY SHOW!
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Santa Monica Playhouse 1211 4th St, Santa Monica. A comedian takes five shots of whiskey in a row and tries to perform an improvised play with five sober comedians. What could go wrong?! Drunk Theatre is the entirely improvised, unpredictable, and crazy comedy show that'll kick your weekend into overdrive. Reserve your spot now as limited seating and space is available. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/drunk-theatre-the-wildest-improv-comedy-show-/15793351/2025-07-11T08

THE NIGHT SKY SHOW
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Santa Monica College 1900 Pico Blvd Santa Monica. The Night Sky Show is a short program with the latest news in space exploration and astronomy. The program uses freeware sky visualization tools to show you the constellations planets and deep sky objects in the Southern California night sky. The show will last about 30 minutes followed by a short Q&A when guests can type questions into a chat box. We will answer as many questions as possible. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/the-night-sky-show/14165546/2025-07-11T19

SATURDAY | JULY 5

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET - SATURDAY MARKET
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Santa Monica Farmers Market - Arizona Ave and 3rd Street Arizona Ave and 3rd Street Santa Monica. Santa Monica Farmers Markets create thriving, vibrant communities that are inclusive, connected, and diverse by promoting the prosperity of California farmers and small food businesses, preservation of the agricultural arts and sustainable food systems. The Saturday Downtown Farmers Market is open from 8:00am to 1:00pm, year-round and operates rain or shine. May be closed for selected holidays. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/downtown-farmers-market-saturday-market/13357377/2025-07-12T08

TOUR OF HYPERION WATER RECLAMATION PLANT
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 12000 Vista del Mar, Playa del Rey. Join Heal the Bay and LA Sanitation & Environment for an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant, the largest wastewater treatment facility in the Western United States. This guided tour offers a unique look into the intricate processes that transform millions of gallons of wastewater each day into a valuable resource for Los Angeles. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/tour-of-hyperion-water-reclamation-plant/15985891/2025-07-12T10

ARTISTS & FLEAS: VENICE MARKETPLACE
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Westminster Elementary School 1010 Abbot Kinney Los Angeles. Artists & Fleas in Venice is located in the vibrant, artistic heart of Venice at the corner of Abbot Kinney and Westminster Avenue in the outdoor lot of Westminister Avenue Elementary School. Join 50+ merchants every Saturday (rain or shine!) for a fabulous lineup of art, design, food trucks and vintage. Date: Every Saturday Time: 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM Location: Westminster Elementary School - 1010 Abbot Kinney Check our website here for a list of vendors. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/artists-fleas-venice-marketplace/14548485/2025-07-12T11

$5 COMMUNITY DOG TRAINING CLASSES!
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Virginia Ave Park 2200 Virgina Ave Santa Monica. People's Dog Training™, a Love At First Sit® host ongoing $5 ongoing Community Dog Training Classes on Saturdays at Virginia Ave Park in Santa Monica. Class proceeds donated to charitable organizations that advocate for animals, and animal shelters and rescues. Sign-up at peoplesdogtraining.com/community-training. $5.00 —General $5.00. First Responders & Wildfire Victims FREE. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/community-dog-training-classes-/11981844/2025-06-21T12


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Better is comprehensive
women's care that's
designed by women for women.
The new Women's Health & Wellness Center at Saint John's offers personalized, holistic care tailored to each and every patient, offering a full range of mental and physical care solutions, well-women exams, gynecology, cancer screenings, and surgical care. Patients are paired with a patient navigator who assists in care advocacy as well as coordinating appointments to ensure a seamless overall experience. A Women's Health & Wellness Center that's actually centered around women is just one of the many ways we treat you for the better.
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