

SEWAGE PLANTS FAILING TO KILL THREAT

Instead, dangerous bacteria arriving from hospitals thrive at the facilities and could endanger beachgoers.

BY MELODY PETERSEN

Every day Southern California hospitals unleash millions of gallons of raw sewage into municipal sewers.

The malodorous muck flows miles to one of the region's sewage plants, where it is treated with the rest of the area's waste and then released as clear water into a stream or directly to the Pacific.

Scientists at the Environmental Protection Agency recently announced they had discovered a lethal superbug — the same one that caused outbreaks at UCLA and two other Los Angeles-area hospitals — in sewage at one of those plants. They declined to name the facility.

EPA scientists did not test treated wastewater flowing out of the plant to determine whether it still contained CRE, or carbapenem-resistant enterobacteriaceae.

But a growing number of studies show sewage plants can't kill the superbugs. Instead the facilities serve as "a luxury hotel" for drug-resistant bacteria, a place where they thrive and grow stronger, said Pedro Alvarez, a professor of environmental engineering at Rice University, one of the scientists studying the problem.

Alvarez and other researchers say the failure of sewage plants to eliminate the dangerous bacteria is one way they may be spreading from hospitals to the environment.

"Chlorine is just not doing it," Alvarez said of the treatment used by most plants.

The fear is that healthy people otherwise not at risk from the bacteria — including swimmers at the beach — could be infected.

Already officials are worried about the surprising number of people sickened with CRE who have not recently visited a medical facility: 8%, according to an October study.

Hospitals are not breaking laws by releasing the sewage. Laws regulate the overall level of disease-causing bacteria in the nation's surface waters, but there is no specific regulation of bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

Deemed the "nightmare" [See Superbugs, A8]

NANCY REAGAN, 1921 - 2016



Ronald Reagan Library

PLAYING BAD COP TO HIS GOOD COP

Nancy Reagan dances with her husband in this undated photograph. She often forced difficult decisions that the famously easygoing chief executive was loath to make.

One of history's most influential first ladies

During a long partnership forged in Hollywood, the ex-actress was seen as her husband's closest advisor

By Elaine Woo

Former First Lady Nancy Davis Reagan, whose devotion to her husband made her a formidable behind-the-scenes player in his administrations and one of the most influential presidential wives in modern times, died Sunday at her home in Los Angeles of congestive heart failure. She was 94.

Although Reagan pursued some programs of her own as first lady, she considered her most important role promoting the political, physical and mental well-being of Ronald Reagan. Launching one of history's most extraordinary partnerships with their 1952 marriage, she became his closest advisor, wielding her influence to defend his interests and advance his goals.

Particularly tough-minded on the hiring and firing of key staffers and Cabinet members, she often played bad cop to his good cop, forcing difficult decisions that the famously easygoing chief executive was loath to make.

"Reagan knew where he wanted to go," biographer Lou Cannon once wrote of the iconic California politician who became a two-term president, "but she had a better sense of what he needed to do to get there." Nancy Reagan, Cannon maintained, "did more than anyone to help him get what he wanted."

One of the 20th century's most popular presidents, Ronald Reagan, who died in 2004, was nicknamed the "Teflon president" because of his ability to deflect almost any controversy or criticism. But his wife was the "flypaper first lady," as longtime advisor Michael Deaver once quipped, because nearly everything negative stuck to her.

She was lambasted for her opulent taste in designer clothes and redecorating the White House, particularly when she ordered \$200,000 worth of new china for state dinners. Ridiculed for the reverential looks she gave her husband, she was the first lady feminists loved to disparage.

When she appeared to feed her husband a line at a news conference ("Doing everything we can" on arms control), she was accused of stage-managing the president. When her displeasure with White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan became front-page news and he was fired, critics called her a drag-on lady.

A new legacy developed in the post-White House years, after her husband's announcement in 1994 that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, a degenerative brain disease. She devoted herself to his care, rarely leaving their Bel-Air home where he was cloistered for the last decade of [See Reagan, A10]

Sanders is not going away quietly

He puts Clinton on the defensive in their debate, mocking her record. Michigan is the next big prize.

BY EVAN HALPER AND MICHAEL A. MEMOLI

FLINT, Mich. — Bernie Sanders made clear Sunday night that he is not about to ease up on Hillary Clinton in the interest of Democratic Party harmony — in fact, the Vermont senator seemed to be spoiling for a fight more than ever.

Clinton was repeatedly put on the defensive by her insurgent rival in a debate in Flint, where Sanders challenged her more personally and relentlessly than he has in previous matchups. If Clinton had hoped to use the nationally televised event as an opportunity to hone her attacks against Republican front-runner Donald Trump, Sanders made that impossible. He would not be ignored.

As voters in Michigan prepare to cast ballots in their primary Tuesday, Sanders is looking to make a defiant stand in the Rust Belt, seeing the region as fertile territory for his brand of economic populism and for a comeback in a race in which he is in desperate need of a big upset.

He mocked Clinton's record on trade and Wall Street, casting her as a late — and opportunistic — convert to progressive economics.

"Secretary Clinton supported virtually every one of the disastrous trade agreements written by corporate America," he said, singling out the North American Free Trade Agreement reached by President Clinton's administration in the 1990s — which, Sanders said, erased "tens of thousands of jobs" in the Midwest.

In contrast, Sanders offered his own early opposition to the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership under consideration by Congress.

"I understood that these trade agreements were going to destroy the middle class of this country," he said. "I led the fight against" them.

[See Democrats, A15]

Two Democratic schools of thought

The political experiences of Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton. **A16**

In France, dreams of England

BY PATRICK J. McDONNELL

GRANDE-SYNTHE, France — The developer's cheerful blueprint, touting a leafy suburban haven, greets returning camp residents as they trudge through the gulches of dense mud that grabs boots and devours dreams.

"Live the city life — in the country!" it promises, but the residential retreat planned for this clearing never came to pass.

These days, few squatting in the mire speak French or even notice the sign in a landscape that now resembles the muck of the trenches that lined this region during the Great War.

England is the destination. [See France, A4]



LILIANA NIETO DEL RIO For The Times

MUDDY environs add to the dreary existence of migrants at the Grande-Synthe camp in France.

Peyton Manning walks away

With two Super Bowl wins and five MVP trophies, the Broncos quarterback retires after 18 stellar years in the NFL. **SPORTS, D1**

Trump and the stock market

Investors consider the possibility of a Donald Trump presidency. **MONDAY BUSINESS, A14**

'Downton' finale

"Downton Abbey" closes its six-season run with plenty of smiles and tears. **CALENDAR, E1**

Weather
Thunderstorm.
L.A. Basin: 59/45. **B8**



Chinese demand fuels resale niche

U.S. intermediaries purchase Western goods, then ship them to eager consumers.

BY FRANK SHYONG

Jennifer Zhong's phone buzzes with a message from one of her 4,000 followers on Weibo, a Chinese service similar to Twitter.

A client in China wants to buy a gold Baublebar necklace, but it's expensive and inconvenient to order products from U.S. websites.

Zhong taps over to another Chinese social network, WeChat, to discuss the transaction, and they settle on a price: \$52.

In her downtown Los Angeles apartment, Zhong

flips open her laptop and finds the necklace on Baublebar's website at the sale price of \$32. When the package arrives, one of the employees of her online store, Jia Jia Buys It for You, removes the receipt, tears off the tags and repackages it for shipment to China.

Social media-fueled transactions such as these have grown so popular in China that they've become an industry known as *dai-gou*, a Chinese phrase that means "to buy on behalf of."

In 2015, luxury *dai-gou* purchases were valued at up to \$7.6 billion, or nearly half of China's overall luxury purchases, according to an estimate by Bain & Co., a consulting firm that tracks consumer trends in China.

And in the San Gabriel [See Daigou, A6]