

# EPA targets San Gabriel Valley water

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Cleaning up the chemical-laced water beneath the San Gabriel Valley is the EPA's top priority on the West Coast, federal official told a frustrated crowd of 100 citizens and local legislators yesterday.

"One million people are dependent on this water supply," said Jeff Zelikson, an official with the Environmental Protection Agency's San Francisco office.

Cleansing their water is "our top priority for the region," Zelikson added. The region includes California, Arizona, Hawaii, Nevada and the Pacific Islands.

More than 100 seriously polluted sites dot those states, Zelikson said. Like the San Gabriel Valley's groundwater basin, these sites are on the EPA's Superfund list. That makes them eligible for federal cleanup dollars.

Yesterday, Zelikson promised that the San Gabriel Valley's underground water supply was going to the top of that list on the West Coast, ahead of the infamous Stringfellow Acid Pits.

Zelikson also pledged to release a specific plan next month for "managing" the polluted groundwater.

"It's about time," said Rep. Esteban Torres, D-Covina, chairman of the House subcommittee on environment and labor.

That committee held a special hearing yesterday at Baldwin Park City Hall.

More than 100 residents and local bureaucrats turned out to blast Zelikson.

"It's obvious that we're dealing with a very entrenched bureaucracy," sniffed Wil Baca of the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association. "They're hard to pin down. We're going to have to put

some heat on them."

Added John Korey of the East Valleys Organization: "We need to be at the point where (EPA officials) get out of bed in the morning and think, 'What can I do to clean up the San Gabriel Valley's water?'"

Ten years have passed since industrial solvents were discovered in that water, which is pumped up from dozens of wells and sent down the pipes to people's taps.

The chemicals involved — principally trichloroethylene (TCE) and tetrachloroethylene (PCE) — are carcinogenic. High levels of these chemicals in the water beneath the San Gabriel Valley have forced water officials to shut down numerous wells.

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## EYE ON EARTH

THE NATIONAL SPACE COUNCIL expects to finish an updated version of the national space policy in time to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing on July 20. Vice President Dan Quayle, who heads the council, said the Bush Administration will emphasize execution of the policy, as opposed to any major changes. "One thing that has been lacking in the past is a coordinated and cohesive policy. . . . Space policy has not been implemented for a long time," the Vice President told Aviation Week. The Bush Administration is likely to increase the emphasis on the use of space for environmental monitoring. A decision on long-term support for the National Aero-Space Plane program will be part of the policy.

## MAGELLAN THRUSTERS

NASA'S MAGELLAN spacecraft used less than 4 kg. of hydrazine propellant for its first course correction May 21, an amount significantly below that planned for the maneuver. The vehicle's trajectory toward Venus is so accurate that the second course correction, scheduled for December, may be unnecessary. Martin Marietta technicians had planned consumption of up to 20 kg. of propellant for all three scheduled en route course corrections.

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times clearer than anything ever taken from a ground-based telescope, and that will improve dramatically as Voyager 2 closes in.

Said Collins: "It is exciting."