



PATTY PERKINSON turns on a generator at her home, where utilities were shut off because of the Rancho Palos Verdes landslides.

Photographs by JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

Living inside the landslide zone

Patty Perkinson wakes up around 5 a.m. in the pitch black of her Rancho Palos Verdes home.

She grabs the large flashlight on her nightstand before she carefully makes her way out to the backyard — avoiding the sliding glass door that will no longer open, passing the cracked and empty pool — to turn on the generator.

Then, she briefly turns on some lights — but not too many — as she gets ready for work alongside her trusty companion, Nike, a fluffy, 14-year-old white Havanese. Perkinson wastes no time, trying to minimize the minutes that her generator guzzles more of the pricey propane. The fuel has become a saving grace, and constant concern, for the 61-year-old high school teacher.

But Perkinson is doing her best to adjust to her new, cobbled-together way of life, ever since she and scores of other residents on the Palos Verdes Peninsula lost power and natural gas service because of worsening landslides in the area.

Rancho Palos Verdes residents face damage and loss of utilities with grit

By Grace Toohey



A FUNDRAISER to save Perkinson's home is displayed on a phone next to a battery charging station at her house.

Almost 300 homes in four nearby neighborhoods are dealing with indefinite electricity shutoffs, according to Southern California Edison. Nearly 230 homes have had natural gas turned off, also indefinitely. Many have lost both as utility companies try to minimize the hazards that come with infrastructure breakdowns, such as gas leaks and potential fire-igniting sparks.

At the root of the escalating emergency in the Portuguese Bend area of the peninsula is unprecedented land movement that has expanded and drastically accelerated, reaching up to a foot a week in some areas. The movement may also be even more widespread than originally observed.

Experts have said the landslides were triggered by rising groundwater levels caused by back-to-back years of exceptionally wet winters.

Despite the worsening conditions and utility shutoffs, the ma-

Fire chiefs call out Forest Service

Shortage of federal crews hinders wildfire response, officials in the Southland say.

By ALEX WIGGLESWORTH

On a scorching September afternoon, an Orange County public works crew moving boulders with heavy machinery sparked a brush fire. The blaze ignited less than two miles from the U.S. Forest Service's Trabuco Station, but the station was unstaffed by federal firefighters. The only crew there was the Orange County Fire Authority's Engine 18.

When that engine arrived on scene, the fire was just half an acre, burning in medium brush with a moderate rate of spread, according to radio communications provided by Orange County Fire Chief Brian Fennessy. The crew also encountered two people who required treatment for smoke inhalation, he said.

Fennessy wonders whether, had a Forest Service engine responded with them, the firefighters could have contained the flames to the grassy flats. Instead, the fire raced up steep slopes into forested areas, growing into a 23,000-acre behemoth that destroyed 160 structures and injured 22 people.

"There's no question in

[See Firefighting, A12]

ANALYSIS

Iran faces quandary in forming a response to Israel

Inaction isn't an option for Tehran, experts agree, but neither is all-out war.

By TRACY WILKINSON AND RAMIN MOSTAGHIM

TEHRAN — Iran faces a complex dilemma over whether to attack Israel directly or use its string of proxy armies — as weakened as some of those now appear — to retaliate for the assassination of the head of the Lebanese Hezbollah militant and political organization.

Diplomats, analysts and officials throughout the region and in the West agree that an all-out war between Iran and Israel would be devastating, quite likely more so for the Islamic Republic than its archenemy.

The fragile state of its economy and domestic politics is another motivation for Iran to hold its fire.

But failure to forcefully avenge the decapitation of its most important proxy — its military and strategic "crown jewel" in the so-called Axis of Resistance that surrounds Israel — could suggest weakness and

[See Iran, A4]

A hot market for housing nonhuman tenants

The construction of data centers is at 'extraordinary levels,' one brokerage says.

By ROGER VINCENT

Where Wilshire Boulevard begins in downtown Los Angeles, thousands of miles of undersea fiber-optic cables disappear into an ordinary-looking office tower.

One Wilshire is the mother of all data centers in the West, a discreet terminus for major digital links between Asia and North America that help sustain the world's bottomless need for data storage and computing power.

Once a workplace for lawyers and other white-collar types, the mid-century office building's 30 floors are now

stuffed with cables, pipes, coolers, generators and other equipment needed to support online functions that power the economy and our private lives at unmatched speed. (If you could get inside — and you can't — the building's internet connection would give you a split-second jump over others when tickets for the World Series or a concert went on sale.)

"We're all consumers of data centers," whether it's scrolling social media on our smartphones, watching streaming services such as Netflix on TV or ordering a dog food delivery on our laptops, said Maile Kaiser, chief revenue officer of data center operator CoreSite, the largest tenant in One Wilshire. "Any content that we make is stored in a data center."

[See Centers, A8]



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

ELECTRICIAN Oscar Rivas works on a new generator system in downtown L.A. in One Wilshire, a hub for major digital links between Asia and North America.

Helene's wrath fuels devastation

Powerful storm leaves people in the Southeast stranded or awaiting rescue. **NATION, A5**

Gubernatorial candidates spar

Democrats looking to succeed Newsom sound off at San Francisco forum. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

The rise of the skater punk

In 1999, "Tony Hawk's Pro Skater" launched a video game revolution. **ENTERTAINMENT, E1**

Weather

Mostly sunny. L.A. Basin: 86°/64. **B6**

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