



TWO ARCHES of downtown L.A.'s 6th Street Viaduct are darkened in late December after thieves stole their copper wires, which can sell for several dollars a pound at recycling centers. Six months later, the lights are out on all 10 pairs of arches on the \$588-million bridge.

The 6th Street Viaduct, dubbed the “Ribbon of Light” for its illuminated tilted arches, is now completely in the dark.

Billy Avellan, who walks the bridge daily from his home in downtown Los Angeles to the city’s historic Eastside, said he’s watched as thieves have gradually stripped miles of copper wiring from lights on the structure for months. He first noticed people stealing the wires in October, and while he’s reported it to the city and Police Department, the theft has continued, even in broad daylight, he said.

First, they targeted the lights along the bridge’s walkway, then the light poles and, most recently, the wiring that helps power the LEDs that brightened the 10 sets of arches.

6th Street Viaduct becomes ‘Ribbon of Dark’ from thefts

After copper wiring is stripped, fixing the lights might cost taxpayers \$2.5 million. Some say enforcement actions should focus on buyers.

By Hannah Fry

Now, Avellan says, it’s “no man’s land.”

“I used to walk it at night all the time,” the 52-year-old said. “It was beautiful. It was well-lit. Some people might say it was too well-lit, but now it’s completely dark and that’s sad.”

Copper wire theft has been a growing problem in the region for years, with thieves disabling streetlights and rail lines to pilfer their conductive wiring, which can fetch several dollars per pound at recycling centers.

Five years ago, between 500 and 600 cases of copper wire theft were reported annually. In the last year, there have been 6,713 cases, with repair costs exceeding \$17 million in Los Angeles, Councilman Kevin de León [See **Bridge**, A7]

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS FDA’S OK OF PILL

Ruling says Christian group has no standing to sue over abortion drug, but it doesn’t preclude a new filing.

By David G. Savage

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed a conservative Christian group’s claim that the abortion medication used by more than 5 million American women is unsafe and should be withdrawn from the market.

In a 9-0 decision, the justices said these antiabortion activists had no standing to sue. And they said conservative judges in Texas had no grounds for overturning the Food and Drug Administration’s regulations that allow for the mifepristone pills to be delivered by mail.

But because the court dismissed the case on standing, the decision does not prevent other antiabortion advocates from filing a similar lawsuit against the FDA, with different plaintiffs.

“The plaintiffs have sincere legal, moral, ideological, and policy objections to elective abortion and to FDA’s relaxed regulation of mifepristone,” Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh wrote for the unanimous court. “But under Article III of the Constitution, those kinds of objections alone do not establish a justiciable case or controversy in federal court. Here, the plaintiffs have failed to demonstrate that FDA’s relaxed regulatory requirements likely would cause them to suffer an injury in fact. For that reason, the federal courts are the wrong forum for addressing the plaintiffs’ concerns about FDA’s actions.”

Last year, justices by a 7-2 vote blocked lower court rulings that would have made it harder for women to obtain the pills. Justices Neil M. Gorsuch, Amy Coney Barrett and Kavanaugh, the three appointees of Donald Trump who had voted to strike down the right to abortion, refused to join the antiabortion doctors who sought to restrict use of the abortion pills.

Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel A. Alito Jr. dissented last year, but they joined Thursday’s ruling holding that the antiabortion doctors had no standing to sue.

The antiabortion doctors [See **Mifepristone**, A7]



A SPACEX Falcon 9 rocket carrying Starlink satellites is seen from Huntington Beach after its liftoff from Vandenberg Space Force Base in March.

Rocket activity booming, unnerving some residents

Sonic jolts from Vandenberg base are on the rise

By Salvador Hernandez

The house jolts and rumbles, and then there’s the unmistakable boom that Mikayla Shocks has been hearing more and more frequently from her Camarillo home.

“One time, I thought a car hit my house,” the mother of four said. “It’s felt by everyone. We hear the boom. My dog freaks out.”

It took a few such incidents and a bit of internet sleuthing before Shocks found the source: sonic booms from rockets launching from Vandenberg Space Force Base.

Space Force officials previously said that such incidents were rare, and that sonic booms from rocket launches and landings had little effect on the coast.

But the Air Force now admits what thousands of residents, from Lompoc to Cam-

arillo, have known for months — sonic booms from Vandenberg Space Force Base regularly rattle a large swath of Southern California, startling residents and wildlife across more than 100 miles of coastline.

The reach of the sonic booms across three Southern California counties was revealed in a new report from the Air Force to the California Coastal Commission, which is reviewing the [See **Boom**, A10]

Your dip in the pool will soon be electric

Air regulators to phase out more than a million appliances fired by natural gas.

By Tony Briscoe

In one of the biggest moves to reduce air pollution in the last decade, Southern California air regulators adopted a rule last week that will require pool and hot tub owners to go electric.

The South Coast Air

Quality Management District’s governing board voted 9 to 1 to effectively phase out certain kinds of natural-gas-fired water-heating equipment in homes and businesses across its four-county jurisdiction: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and part of San Bernardino.

The rule approved June 7 will lead to the replacement over three decades of more than 1 million gas-burning appliances — including an estimated 700,000 pool heaters and 300,000 tankless [See **Pool**, A7]

Phoenix police faulted for bias

Justice Department probe confirms pattern of civil rights violations in nation’s fifth most populous city. **NATION, A5**

Police overhaul study approved

L.A. City Council votes to review whether officers should be removed from traffic enforcement. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Weather

Clouds, then sun. L.A. Basin: 79/60. **B5**

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STUART W. PALLEY For The Times

FIRE INSURERS PRODDED

California regulators identify high-risk areas where firms must offer coverage in order to take advantage of financial incentives. **BUSINESS, A6**



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