

HINKLEY, CA AND PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC CO, GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION

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Introduction

- The Hinkley groundwater contamination was started by the Pacific Gas & Electric Company.
- They dumped a large volume of hexavalent chromium (chromium-6) into an unlined pond (2).
- This affected residents of Hinkley as PG&E practiced this behavior in the span of two decades (50s-60s).
- The contamination adverse effect on the locals (1).



Figure 2 protest sign



Figure 1 Warning sign in Hinkley

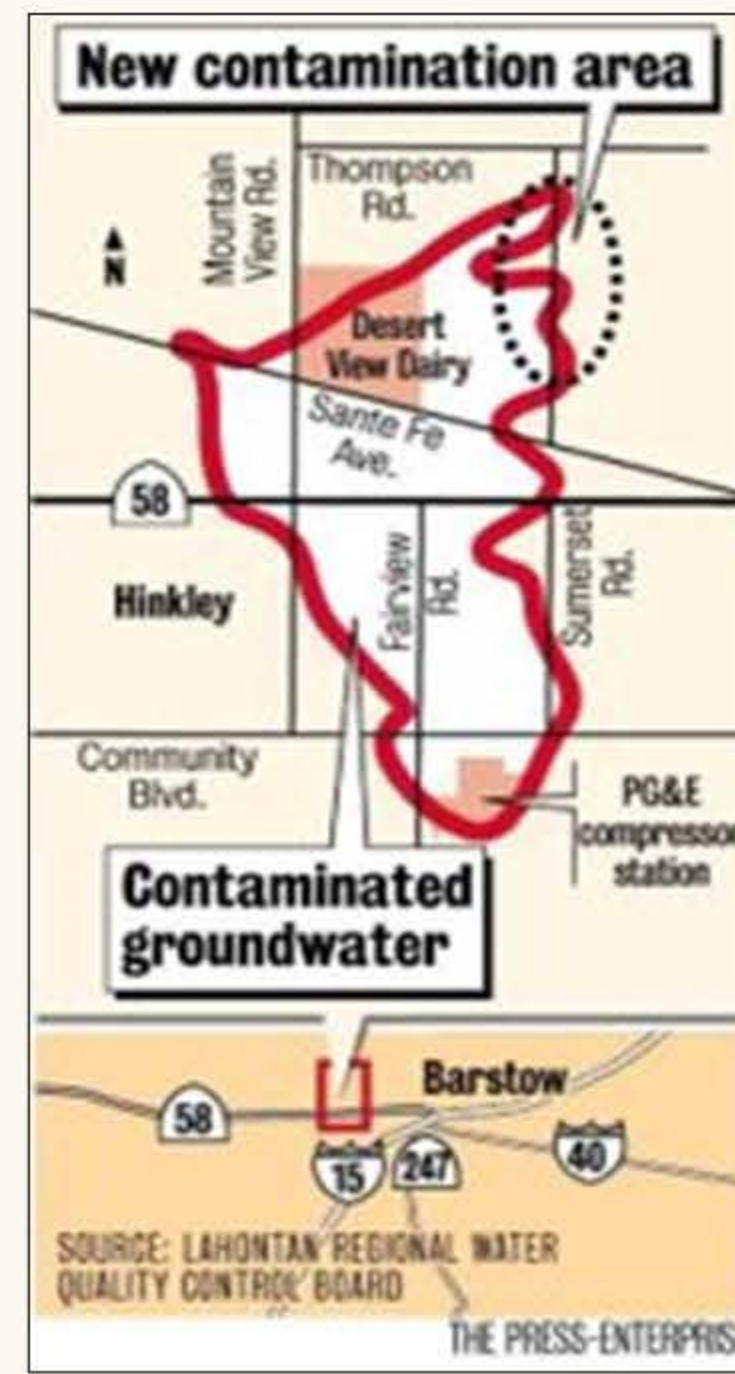


Figure 3 Area of contamination

Lawsuit

- The town after decades of adverse health effects prepared a legal defense against PGE.
- Resulting in 1996 with the company legally having to pay the victims 333 million dollars (6).



Figure 5 Hinkley residents protesting

Figure 7 Mojave River basin

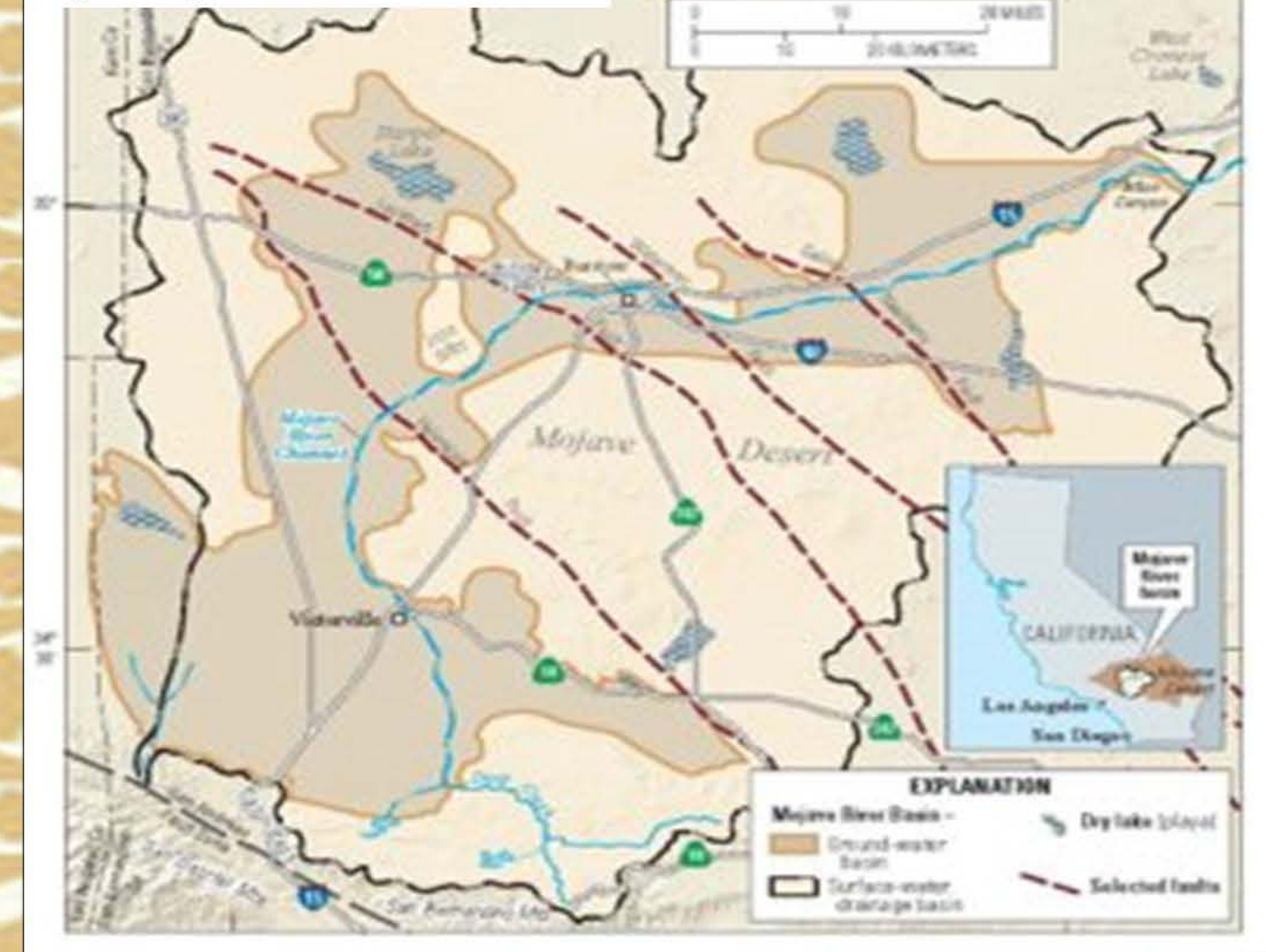
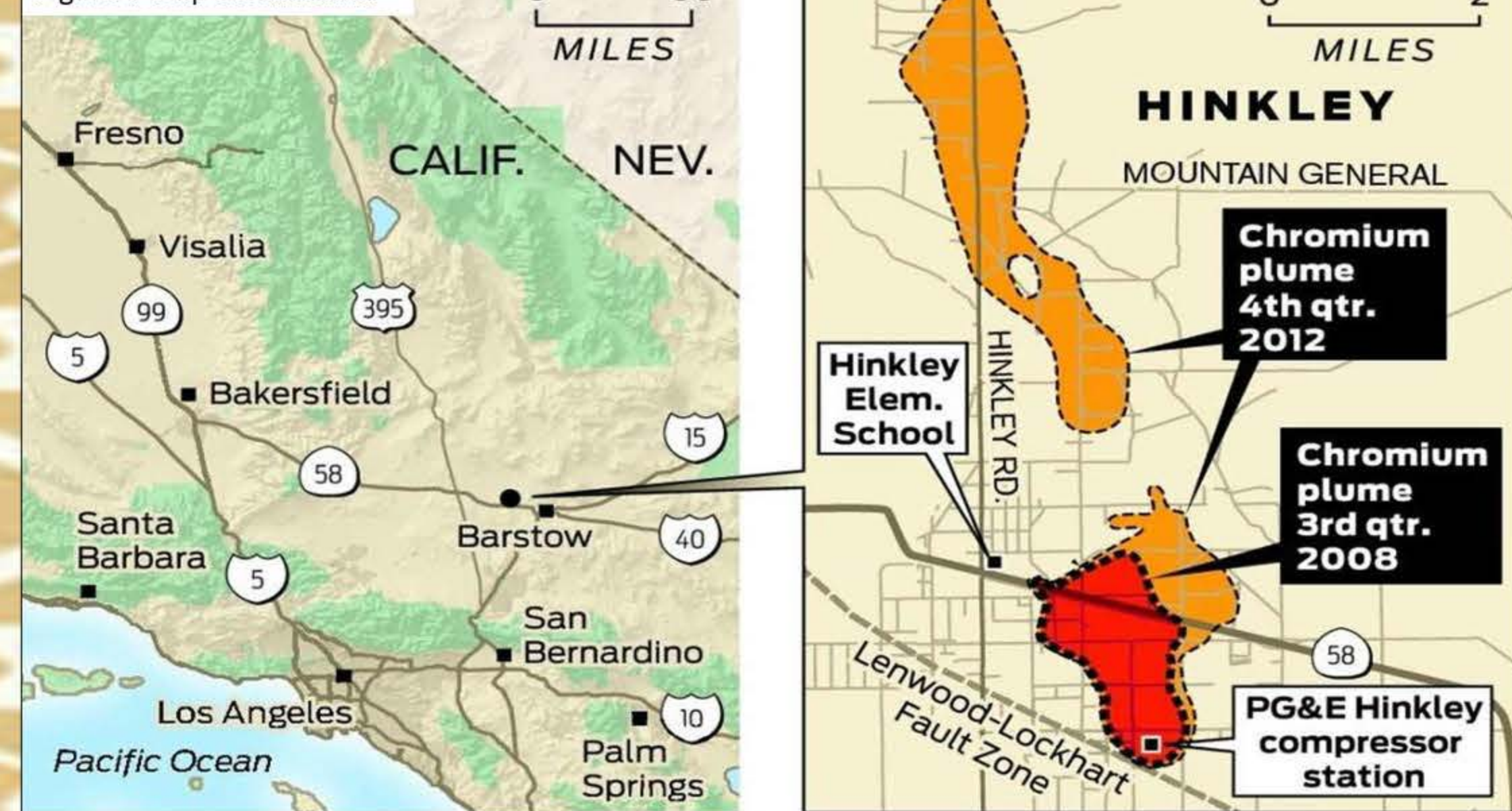


Figure 6 map of California



Source: Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board John Blanchard / The Chronicle

Hinkley

- Hinkley California is a dry settlement in the heart of the Mojave desert
- This makes water a very valuable resource for the community (4)
- To this day the town population has not grown and is unlikely to in the future.

Cleanup

- PGE had spent upwards of 700 million in cleanup/ damages cost throughout the area (6).



Figure 8 cleanup crew in Hinkley

Effects on the public

- The effects on the environment are very noticeable as the chromium leached into the ground, water, and even effected the air (1).
- The people of Hinkley itself shirking in both population and size (3).
- These chemicals caused cancer, mental illness, and depression resulting in some deaths. (1).



Figure 4 abandoned house

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