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## The Neighborhood Files

# How to Take Down a Power Plant in About 2 Minutes

Officials gathered Friday to walk through how the South Bay power plant implosion is expected to happen at 7 a.m. Saturday. Dynamite has been added to the site since Tuesday.

By [Khari Johnson](#) [Email the author](#) February 1, 2013

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**Business leaders, environmentalists and local, county and state public officials gathered in Chula Vista Bay to get rid of the South Bay Power Plant and talk about how the three-story structure that weighs near 25,000 tons will be taken down.**

**Events, and deals sent to you daily and if weather permits and wind speed remains below 15 mph, the power plant implosion will go forward Saturday as it happens. See more options and designated area in Chula Vista, as well as from Coronado across the bay.**

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The South Bay Power Plant was built in the late 1950s, began operations in 1960 and was decommissioned. The "eyesore" from the waterfront was a collaborative effort between South Bay politicians and community leaders. SDG&E in 1998, said Port Commission Chair Ann Moore.

At its peak, the plant provided power to hundreds of thousands of homes, she said.

"This power plant has served its purpose, but now it's time for it to go," she said.

As part of the 550-acre **Chula Vista Bayfront Master Plan** that received approval from the state last year, used for an RV park, public park and other purposes.

Contractors started to place dynamite in the power plant's steel columns on Tuesday, said Kristine Zortmar.

Here's how it should go down:

- "About 15 minutes prior to the implosion you will start to notice a fine mist cloud at the base of the structure and to minimize the dust cloud at the end," she said.
- The first noises people will hear are about 200 pounds of detonated charges igniting 300 pounds of dynamite.
- The entire process is expected to take less than two minutes.
- "Once the explosions have been detonated, the sounds you will hear are similar to rolling thunder across the bay."
- After the detonations, the steel will begin to give and the 165-foot tall structure will collapse on itself.

"The first three stacks and those boiler units will fall down towards the north, the last boiler will collapse upwards. The implosion is slated to occur in about a 1.5 minute window," she said.

The implosion is being arranged by the plant's former operator, Dynegey South Bay LLC.

Crews have worked since 2011 to remove asbestos, disconnected electrical lines and take fuel out of the power plant.

The power plant is a historic symbol that marks the transformation of South Bay's waterfront, said Cindy Garcia, Chula Vista Mayor. The Economic Development Council. The retail, convention center and hotel space the master plan envisions could generate a billion dollars for the region's economy.

"Here are the times that you see folks that support economic development and environmentalists standing together for what you have tomorrow. We are extremely grateful," she said.

Laura Hunter with the Environmental Health Coalition also called the power plant's destruction a symbol, but said it's a necessary step.

"And now we have a bay that people are actually going to be able to see and for the first time in 60 years it will recover," she said. "We hope that the whole region will take this momentous occasion to say as a demonstration of a fossil-free future. It's time for us to evolve. We can do it. We should do it."

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Politicians, environmentalists and business leaders who attended the meeting will receive news, events, and deals sent to you daily and

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include Chula Vista Mayor Cindy Garcia  
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State Senator Denise Moreno Ducheny of Imperial Beach, county Supervisor Greg Cox, Port Commissioners former council members from Coronado, Chula Vista and National City.

– City News Service contributed to this report.

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