



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

Chuck Finnie

(510) 583-4434

[chuck.finnie@hayward-ca.gov](mailto:chuck.finnie@hayward-ca.gov)

## **Hayward Mayor, City Manager to testify at Thursday hearing against restart of power plant following unexplained explosion**

**HAYWARD, Calif.**, June 12, 2021—The California Energy Commission will hold a public hearing Thursday on Calpine Corp.'s application to restart its Hayward power plant following an unexplained explosion at the facility that sent chunks of hot metal flying hundreds of feet—including a 15 pound piece that cut through the roof of a recreation room 1200 feet away at a transitional housing center for people experiencing homelessness.

Hayward Mayor Barbara Halliday and City Manager Kelly McAdoo will appear at the hearing—which is to be held on Zoom starting at 10 a.m. Thursday, July 15—to testify against the restart until the cause of the May 27 explosion and fire is determined, and a full assessment and public review of the safety risks and potential environmental and health impacts is complete.

“The health, safety and environmental justice concerns for the Hayward community cannot be ignored by the commission or Calpine in this process,” Halliday will testify during the hearing.

The explosion shortly before midnight at the Russell City Energy Center originated with a steam turbine, ignited a fire of burning lubrication oil, and resulted in an evacuation order for people living in proximity to the power plant due to the presence of highly explosive hydrogen gas at the facility.

Heavy smoke forced workers at an adjacent City of Hayward wastewater treatment facility to seek refuge indoors. Despite the extensive debris field from the explosion, no injuries or deaths were reported—though health impacts on Hayward firefighters who responded to the incident are still being assessed.

Since the City of Hayward announced last Monday its opposition to Calpine's application to restart the power plant, dozens of local residents and organizations have submitted comments to the CEC also stating opposition to the restart.

According to an analysis of Calpine's application to restart the plant, the company wants to resume operations at roughly half its energy-generating capacity but in a manner that would generate twice the amount of carbon emissions per unit of electricity created.

The power plant, which began operations in August 2013, is a combined-cycle facility comprised of two gas turbines and a steam turbine. It generates electricity from natural gas and generally is relied upon to deliver power during peak periods of demand primarily in summer months. The steam turbine that experienced the catastrophic failure receives heat from the high temperature exhaust gases generated by the gas-powered turbines, and uses the heat to produce steam to drive the steam turbine and generate additional electricity.

California Energy Commission (CEC) staff have given provisional approval to the early restart—but have scheduled the 10 a.m. Thursday, July 15, public hearing so the CEC commission can hear the City's and other public testimony before rendering a decision.

Members of the public also can participate in the meeting and provide public comments. For remote access via Zoom or to join by telephone, the CEC has provided the following: Click <https://energy.zoom.us/j/93869230237?pwd=Zm96c09ULzdXTjd4eIdtUXdnUGErdez09>. Zoom may also be accessed at <https://zoom.us/join>. To join, enter the **meeting ID 938-6923-0237** and the **password mtg@10am**. To participate by phone, dial (669) 900-6833 or (888) 475-4499 (toll free) and enter meeting ID **938-6923-0237**. For Zoom technical support dial (888) 799-9666 ext. 2, or contact the CEC's Public Advisor's Office for help at [publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov](mailto:publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov), (916) 654-4489 or (800) 822-6228.

For additional information on how to participate, and updates on the Russell City Energy Center and Calpine's application to restart the power plant, go online [here](#) to the City of Hayward's website.