

Bulge scare suspends demolition of Days Inn

Officials close four blocks of Coronado Drive, but it turns out it was cosmetic stucco, not the structural wall, that bowed out, officials say.

By WILL VAN SANT
Published March 21, 2006

CLEARWATER - A stretch of Coronado Drive in Clearwater Beach was closed for three hours Monday when the wall of a partly demolished hotel threatened to fall into the street.

Shortly before 11 a.m., Clearwater firefighters noticed that a four-story wall of what remains of the Days Inn was bulging outward. The slightest tremor, it appeared, would bring debris cascading down on pedestrians and vehicles.

Within minutes, four blocks of Coronado, from Gulfview Avenue to Fifth Street, was shut down. As demolition team members and building officials assessed the situation, traffic snarled at the Clearwater Beach roundabout and was brought to a stop along Memorial Causeway Bridge.

The closing was a hassle for motorists, but provided some entertainment for those who had come to packed Clearwater Beach for spring break.

"That would be ... sweet if it fell in the street," said 18-year-old Chris Delcastillo, a senior at Armwood High School in Seffner, who watched the demolition with friends.

Delcastillo might not get his wish.

The Days Inn project is among several demolition jobs Sonny Glasbrenner is managing to make way for Kiran Grand Resort & Spa, a massive project developed by Tampa businessman and philanthropist Kiran Patel.

Glasbrenner said his company does 400 to 500 demolitions a year in Tampa Bay. He said it was cosmetic stucco, not the structural wall, that had bowed out toward Coronado, which runs along the rear of the hotel.

"Everybody just kind of got excited about it," he said. "And I understand their concern."

Kevin Garriott, a Clearwater building official, said Glasbrenner had cooperated with police and his team and that demolition could continue. It was stopped about 2 p.m. so massive steel girders could be removed from the debris pile.

Glasbrenner said the steel would be recycled and reused.

Coronado was then opened.

Demolition might continue as early as Wednesday morning.

City officials Monday had not decided whether they would close any streets as a safety measure.

© 2007 • All Rights Reserved • St. Petersburg Times
490 First Avenue South • St. Petersburg, FL 33701 • 727-893-8111
[Contact the Times](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Standard of Accuracy](#) | [Terms, Conditions & Copyright](#)