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## Revamped Fremont biodigester expected to power 2,500 homes annually



The Fremont Regional Digester will be fully operational this fall after being closed for about two years. (Photo courtesy of Matthew Gryczan)

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FREMONT, MI -- The revamped [Fremont Regional Digester](#) is expected to divert 165,000 tons of organic waste and produce enough electricity to power 2,500 annually.

Closed in 2015 after an initial opening in 2012, the biodigester is under new ownership and management. San Francisco-based Generate Capital Inc. bought the plant, and invested "substantially" throughout 2017 to resume operations.

Upgrades make it possible for the plant to run 24/7, and handle about 120,000 gallons of organic waste daily.

A test start-up was completed in July, and the plant, 1634 Locust St. in Fremont Industrial Park, will be fully operational this fall.

"We are working with nearby food processors and agribusinesses to help divert thousands of tons of waste from landfills," said Daniel Meccariello, chief operating officer of Wisconsin-based Dynamic Systems Management, which is contracted to manage the plant. "We will be able to accept and process just about any type of organic material and turn it into an immediately usable, environmentally-friendly form of energy for local families."

The way the digester works can be likened to a massive mechanical version of a human or animal digestive system. Organic waste is removed from its packaging, ground into a water slurry and then pumped into digestion tanks. In the tanks, micro-organisms convert the slurry into biogas, which is used to generate power. The leftover solids are then used as an organic fertilizer at local farms.

Biogas produced from the digester will be used to generate more than 2.8 megawatts of electricity. With typical Michigan households using about 8,500 kilowatt hours per year, the digester should produce enough electricity to power 2,500 homes.

Among companies diverting waste and sending it to the digester is Gerber.

"Nestle Gerber has worked with the digester in Fremont since the beginning, and we appreciate the value it brings to the community and the environment," said Tom Boerger, Fremont factory manager for Gerber.

When the [original \\$22 million plant opened in 2012](#), it had capacity to produce enough energy to power about 1,500 homes annually. It was developed by Michigan-based Novi Energy.

"The digester not only benefits our local economy by supporting food and agricultural producers in West Michigan by recycling food waste to produce electricity, but will also create a lasting impact on the Fremont community and our natural environment," said Todd Blake, Fremont city manager.