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## resident's Message



Michael "Mike" C. Cameron has been the General Manager of Oro Loma Sanitary District for nearly 15 years. Last November, he announced his intention to retire on May 3, 2008, and is currently working closely with the Oro Loma Board in a search for his replacement.

Unlike many managers of sanitary districts, Mike didn't come up through the ranks. He actually started his career as a Walnut Creek police officer, rose to the rank of sergeant and eventually accepted "an offer he couldn't refuse" in the financial services industry. During his ten years in the private sector, he held a number of senior executive positions.

Mike has long been an advocate of giving customers and taxpayers premium service at a reasonable cost. He believes that the key to achieving this goal is to manage a government agency more like a business than a bureaucracy.

The Oro Loma Board of Directors has similar beliefs, and it was perhaps this merging of ideas that prompted the Board to hire Mike as the General Manager in August 1993. Although he had no experience in the industry, Mike was a licensed general contractor and had a Masters degree in Public Administration. The Board

concluded that Mike's views on government, combined with his education and broad management experience, would likely move the District into very productive directions. And this has certainly proven to be the case.

Initially, Mike significantly reduced the size of the District's staff, but maintained competitive wages and benefits for employees. These actions have saved over one million dollars per year for 15 years. Mike also formed a partnership with the Board and the staff to move forward as a team. This created a number of synergies and a high level of productivity at a very low cost.

Over the years, the District has won numerous industry and financial awards, such as CWEA Plant of the Year, CSRMA Safety Program of the Year, Excellence in Financial Reporting, etc. During Mike's tenure, the District spent \$85 million in capital improvements, including major pipeline replacements and a total modernization of the District's wastewater treatment plant. In spite of these expenses, the District has consistently maintained the lowest sewer service charges in Alameda County, and some of the lowest rates in the entire state

of California. Moreover, the District's capital reserves are double what they were when Mike came to the District, and the costs of employee retirement benefits are fully funded well into the future.

Mike is quick to point out that all of this would not have been possible without a dedicated and supportive Board of Directors and staff. The Board sets the policy, and the Oro Loma staff works diligently to achieve those goals. In doing so, the staff has a remarkable record of high productivity, low use of sick leave, and an even more remarkable safety record.

Mike is a native of the San Francisco Bay Area, and has no plans to leave the area after he retires. He has a number of hobbies and outside interests that should keep him busy when he is not traveling with his wife or visiting his daughter at her college.

The Oro Loma Board of Directors and staff wish to thank Mike for displaying such high standards of honor and integrity, sensitivity and responsiveness over the last 15 years, and for providing such sound leadership to the District. We also appreciate and will miss Mike's sense of humor, and we extend our best wishes to him for a long, healthy, and enjoyable retirement.

## Know Your Utilities

Water is running down your street—but where is it coming from? Sometimes it's hard to tell. If you're not sure, call Oro Loma at (510) 276-4700. The District has a crew on hand 24 hours a day, seven days a week to handle emergencies. If there is a sewer problem, the sooner the District is notified, the sooner repairs can begin.

But the problem may have nothing to do with the sewer main. Maybe the water is coming from a fire hydrant, water main valve (EBMUD 866-403-2683), or a clogged storm drain (Alameda County Flood Control 510-670-5480). Here are photos of common fixtures you'll find in the street.

Remember—If you think there might be a sewer problem, call Oro Loma!



Water main  
valve cover

Sewer manhole  
cover

Storm drain inlet