



Oro Loma Sanitary District
2655 Grant Avenue
San Lorenzo, CA 94580

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Seismic Upgrade
to the Sewer
System

Spotlight on Excellence Chad McCarthy

In January 2009, Chad McCarthy became the newest member of the Oro Loma team as a Utility Worker Trainee. Chad was selected from over 250 applicants.

Oro Loma's newest employee, who has a certificate in aircraft maintenance and who had worked eight years as an aircraft mechanic, was attracted to wastewater treatment in large part because of the field's environmental importance.

To prepare for his new career, Chad entered the Tri-Valley Regional Occupational Program (ROP). This program prepares students to become certified wastewater treatment operators. In addition to the ROP, Chad completed a volunteer internship with the San Leandro wastewater treatment plant. Working at a wastewater treatment facility convinced Chad that he had made the right career move. The work is challenging, the people in the industry are professionals, and there is great opportunity for growth.

With his background in mechanics, Chad has a lot to offer the Maintenance Department, but he is just as happy working in Operations. He is glad to do whatever he can to help out, and is looking forward to many years with Oro Loma in whatever capacity he is most needed.

Chad's family lives in the area, and Chad is a graduate of San Lorenzo High School. He plans to marry in August and continue to live nearby. In his spare time, Chad enjoys the outdoors, sports, and traveling.

Note: Since this was first written, Chad was promoted to Plant Operator I. Congratulations, Chad!



POLLUTION PREVENTION

Mercury

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that is found in air, water and soil. Once deposited, certain microorganisms can change mercury into methylmercury, a highly toxic compound that builds up in fish, shellfish and animals that eat fish. People who eat food with high levels of mercury risk harm to their brains, hearts, kidneys, lungs, and immune systems. Methylmercury in the bloodstream of unborn babies and young children may harm the developing nervous system, making the child less able to think and learn.

Mercury has been used to make household products including:

- **Fluorescent light tubes and bulbs, high intensity discharge (HID), metal halide, sodium, and neon bulbs.**
- **Thermostats**—There is mercury inside the sealed glass “tilt switch” of old-style thermostats.
- **Electrical Switches and Relays**—These typically contain about 3.5 grams of mercury each. Mercury switches can be found in some chest freezers, pre-1972 washing machines, sump pumps, electric space heaters, clothes irons, silent light switches, automobile hood and trunk lights, and ABS brakes.
- **Pilot Light Sensors**—Mercury-containing switches are found in some gas appliances such as stoves, ovens, clothes dryers, water heaters, furnaces and space heaters.
- **Mercury Gauges**—Some gauges, such as barometers, manometers, blood pressure, and vacuum gauges contain mercury.
- **Mercury Added Novelties**—Examples include greeting cards that play music when opened; athletic shoes (made before 1997) with flashing lights in soles; and mercury maze games.
- **Mercury Fever Thermometers**—Mercury thermometers typically contain about 0.5 grams of mercury.

As Oro Loma customers, the greatest contribution you can make in preventing mercury from entering the environment is to keep it out of the sewer system and waterways. You can properly dispose of items containing mercury by bringing them to an Alameda County hazardous waste disposal site. Call (800) 606-6606 for locations and hours.