



# ORO LOMA NEWS

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(510) 276-4700

[www.roloma.org](http://www.roloma.org)

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## Inside

- **Winners of 2013 Poster Contest Announced April 22**
- **Mandatory Commercial and Multi-Family Recycling**
- **Helpful Reminders**
- **Ready, Set, Recycle**
- **Pollution Prevention**
- **Sewer Replacement Project**
- **Spotlight on Excellence**  
Anna M. Wilewski-Turon  
Raul Saballos

Oro Loma Sanitary District  
2655 Grant Avenue  
San Lorenzo, CA 94580  
(510) 276-4700  
[www.roloma.org](http://www.roloma.org)  
Questions:  
[info@roloma.org](mailto:info@roloma.org)

Emergency 24/7 Phone  
(510) 276-4700

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## Oro Loma Breaks Ground on Two New Digesters

This month, the District started construction of two new anaerobic digesters with a total budgeted project cost of \$12 million.

Oro Loma currently uses five digesters to stabilize solids separated from the wastewater stream. During a recent condition assessment, staff discovered corrosion in the reinforcing steel of the largest digester, constructed in 1958. The findings led to an analysis of various alternatives, including reconditioning the 1958 digester or constructing new facilities and removing the largest unit from service. The analysis showed that the lowest cost, long-term alternative for the digestion system was to construct two new digesters.

The findings led to a joint meeting of the Oro Loma and Castro Valley Sanitary District (25% owner in the treatment plant) Boards, acceptance of the recommended plan, and allocation of \$12M for the effort. Staff then partnered with Kennedy Jenks Engineers to prepare plans and specifications. The design was completed, publicly bid, and the construction contract was awarded to Mountain Cascade, Inc. Due to the favorable construction bid, staff anticipates that the project will be completed for \$1M less than the original budget projection.

Construction of the project is now underway and will be completed by the end of 2014. Funding for the project, which requires the equivalent of \$180 per customer, will be supplied from

available reserves. The citizens of Oro Loma may be happy to know that their existing sewer service rate already includes funds for this significant renewal of their infrastructure. The District's reserve policy and funding level included an acknowledgement that the digester system was nearing the end of its reliable life. The digesters constructed today are expected to deliver 75 years of service.

The digester facilities are the last major area of the Oro Loma-Castro Valley Treatment Plant to be upgraded within the last 15 years. Since 2000, the treatment plant has undergone extensive upgrades to its electrical and emergency power systems, headworks, influent pumping, primary and secondary clarifiers, chlorine contact basins, sodium hypochlorite storage, thickening, and dewatering systems.

Digesters are an important step in the wastewater treatment process. They are used to stabilize the solids that are separated from the treated effluent. Stabilization reduces pathogens, reduces odors, and makes the resulting product unattractive to rodents or other vectors. During digestion, methane is produced and captured. Oro Loma uses the methane in two engines coupled with electrical generators. The electricity produced by the generators, along with the power from the District's solar array, is enough to make the plant electrically self sufficient.



Oro Loma presently has five digesters.

## Winners of the Oro Loma/ Waste Management 2013 Poster Contest Announced April 22

### IT'S YOUR BAY



### KEEP IT CLEAN

The deadline for the Oro Loma/Waste Management 2013 Poster Contest was March 22, 2013. All the posters have been received and the judging is complete. Winners of the contest will be announced on Earth Day, April 22. The theme of the 2013 poster contest was "It's Your Bay—Keep It Clean."

Students were asked to show what they can do to keep the Bay clean, including how to help prevent sewer overflows by not flushing items down the toilet that should instead be discarded in the trash. Almost 2,500 students attending grades K-12 in Oro Loma submitted posters.

Prize categories in this, the District's 19<sup>th</sup> annual poster contest, include a Recycling Star Kindergarten group in which five students will win \$100 each. Cash prizes of \$700 for First Place, \$500 for Second Place, \$300 for Third Place, and \$150 for Honorable Mention (two) will also be awarded in six grade groups from first to twelfth grades. Matching cash prizes will be awarded to the winning students' schools. Schools that submitted eligible entries but had no winners receive \$100 Participation Awards. Ten Certificate of Merit winners in the six 1-12 grade groups will receive \$25 each.

Although students who won a First through Honorable Mention prize will know on April 22 that they won a prize, they will not know until the awards ceremony on May 28 which prize they won. Certificate of Merit recipients will know on April 22 that they won that prize.

A list of winners, including Certificate of Merit recipients, will be posted on the District's website, [www.oroeloma.org](http://www.oroeloma.org), on April 22. After the awards ceremony, a complete list of winners and prizes will be posted, along with links to the posters.

### Helpful Reminders

Don't forget to bring your bag!

- Get in the habit of bringing your own bags when you go to the store.
- Keep reusable bags in your car to use when you go shopping.
- Store bags near the front door, the door to the garage, or wherever you keep your grocery list.



### READY ★ SET, RECYCLE

Keep recyclables out of your trash and you could win a gift card from Peet's Coffee, Jamba Juice, Safeway and more.

#### Contest Rules:

- Keep all recyclables and organics out of the garbage cart.
- Set your carts at the curb on your pick-up day.
- Garbage carts from single family homes in Alameda County will be selected and checked at random.
- The households with randomly selected garbage carts that contain less than 10% (by weight) of compostable and recyclable material will be eligible to win a \$50 gift card.
- A customer may decline to participate in the contest, which means that the customer's solid waste and recycling carts will not be checked during the contest for proper sorting of recyclables and organics. To decline, go to [www.readysetrecyclecontest.org/opt-out-form/](http://www.readysetrecyclecontest.org/opt-out-form/) and complete the opt out form. For more information please visit: [www.readysetrecyclecontest.org/faq/](http://www.readysetrecyclecontest.org/faq/).



## Mandatory Commercial and Multi-Family Recycling Deadline

With the passage of AB341, commercial enterprises and public entities that generate four or more cubic yards of garbage per week, and multi-family housing complexes with five or more units are required to adopt recycling practices. The state law went into effect on July 1, 2012.

While many businesses and housing complexes have already complied with the new regulations, some have not. All businesses and housing units covered under this law must have a recycling program in place by June 30, 2013. Waste Management can provide customers with free waste and recycling assessments to meet their needs and bring them into compliance. To set up a waste and recycling assessment appointment for your business or multi-family housing complex, call Waste Management at (510) 613-8710.



# POLLUTION PREVENTION

## BayWise.org Answers Your Disposal Questions

Want to know what to do with that half-empty can of pesticide or paint thinner? How about that dead car battery or cell phone? BayWise.org has the answer. Go to [www.BayWise.org](http://www.BayWise.org), key in the item you want to discard and your zip code. A list of safe and legal disposal locations near you will be displayed.

Key in “drugs” or “medications” or “pharmaceuticals” and the BayWise’s search engine will display a list of convenient sites that will take your old, expired, or unwanted prescriptions and over-the-counter medications. Proper disposal is important for the health of the environment. Traces of popular heart medications, anti-depressants, antibiotics, cholesterol-lowering drugs, chemotherapy drugs, veterinary drugs, and hormones are turning up in groundwater across the world. A recent

water quality study found these and other drugs present in San Francisco Bay. The easiest way to limit the amount of harmful drugs in our water is to not flush them down the toilet, pour them down the drain, or put them in the trash.

Oro Loma residents are encouraged to dispose of their unwanted pharmaceuticals at the following locations:

1. **Ted’s Drugs**, 27453 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward, CA 94545 (510) 782-6494
2. **Davis Street Family Resource Center**, 3081 Teagarden St., San Leandro, CA 94577 (510) 347-4620
3. **Medical Arts Pharmacy**, 13847 E. 14th St., San Leandro, CA 94578 (510) 357-1881

While you are at BayWise, click on the interactive Eco-Home. Here you will find room-by-room tips that will make your home and San Francisco Bay healthier.

BayWise.org also offers the following easy tips for a healthy environment:

Reduce what you buy • Reduce use of toxic pesticides and landscape chemicals • Properly dispose of household hazardous waste • Don’t flush unwanted medication • Prevent fats, oil and grease from going down the drain • Swap out mercury-containing devices for digital ones • Buy rechargeable batteries • Don’t be a litter bug • Wash your car at a commercial car wash • Spread the word!

Each tip includes handy links for more information and guides.

## Sewer Replacement Project

Management of the collection system infrastructure is key to providing great service to the citizens of Oro Loma. The collection system includes 280 miles of underground piping and 14 lift stations that carry wastewater from each home or business to the treatment plant.

Oro Loma staff performs photographic inspections of every inch of the District’s 280 mile piping system every 2.5 years. To perform inspections, a collection system worker guides a wheeled camera through the District’s pipes, records the condition, and grades each defect using a nationally recognized scoring system. Based upon the scoring and digitally recorded visuals from the field, engineering staff evaluate and prioritize repairs, and select projects to fit within the \$2M annual budget allocation for ongoing collection system renewal (representing \$43/customer). Typical defects include root intrusion, cracked pipes, and offset joints.

When selecting lines for renewal, pipes are grouped into specific geographic areas of the District to provide construction efficiencies. This year, the targeted area is in the northwest portion of the District, east of Bayfair Mall. Work began in September 2012, and will continue to August 2013. Work on a specific street usually takes a week. During construction, there will be no disruption of service, and residents will retain access to their homes and garages. Property owners will be notified 72 hours before work begins on their street.

Oro Loma uses a trenchless pipe-bursting technique that pulls in a new pipe in the place of the existing. The old pipe is shattered

in the process, and remains in the ground around the newly inserted high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe. The HDPE pipe is more durable than clay pipe and does not allow root intrusion or groundwater infiltration. Trenchless pipe-bursting is cost effective, allows access to homes and businesses during construction, and is relatively fast to install.

In addition to this \$2 million sewer replacement project, Oro Loma will spend \$1 million to make “spot” repairs in other sections of the District to repair small segments of otherwise sound pipeline. The citizens of Oro Loma may be pleased to know that approximately one third of their sewer service charges are invested back into the collection system infrastructure to provide long-term system performance. The remaining charges are used to renew the treatment facility and to pay for ongoing operational expenses.



*Trenchless pipe-bursting causes minimal disruption.*



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

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Oro Loma  
to Build  
Two New  
Digesters

## Important Phone Numbers to Keep Handy

Oro Loma Sanitary District Office and  
24/7 Emergency Response:..... (510) 276-4700  
Waste Management: ..... (510) 613-8710

Alameda County Recycling Hotline: . (877) STOPWASTE  
Alameda County  
Household Hazardous Waste: ..... (800) 606-6606

## Spotlight on Excellence



### Anna M. Wilewski-Turon

After 29 years of dedicated service to the District, Oro Loma's Finance Manager Anna M. Wilewski-Turon is retiring in May.

As Finance Manager, Anna has been responsible for making sure the District meets all its fiduciary responsibilities. These include budget preparation,

investments, risk management, payroll, customer billings and payments, internal audits, debt services, and preparation of annual comprehensive financial statements.

Under Anna's able stewardship, the District has received the GFOA (Government Finance Officer Association) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for 17 consecutive years. The first certificate was received in 1995. At that time, the District was the first sanitary district to receive such an award in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, San Francisco or Santa Clara Counties.

Anna has more than 40 years of professional experience in public finance and management. Prior to her employment with the District, she worked for the East Bay Dischargers Authority, the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District, the City of Hayward, and private corporations. She holds an MS degree in Economics with a minor in International Finance and Accounting from the Business School of Planning and Statistics (SGIPS), Warsaw, Poland.

After retiring, Anna plans to spend time with her husband, Wojtek, and her four grandchildren. She also plans to travel, devote time to various charities, and pursue her many artistic interests.



### Raul Saballos

Raul Saballos was a young man in his early 20s when he started working for Oro Loma as a Plant Operator I. It wasn't his first job, but it was the first job where he felt he could make a difference. As a wastewater plant operator, Raul would be part of a crew that

worked to protect the environment. That was 38 years ago, and Raul has been with Oro Loma ever since.

A senior operator for the last 32 years, Raul was in charge of overseeing the daily operations of the plant. Over the years, he has seen technological advances that have helped Oro Loma meet ever-increasing environmental and regulatory challenges, including the completion of the historic \$35 million Plant Capacity Restoration Project. Just as important as the latest technology are the people who make the plant run. In his career, Raul felt especially privileged to work with and learn from Oro Loma legend Al Camisa, and in turn to pass on his knowledge by mentoring several generations of operators.

On May 24, Raul will retire. He will miss the people, the camaraderie, and the important work he has been doing. But he won't miss the graveyard shifts that saw him at the plant Saturdays at 10:00 pm, or the fact that his unusual work schedule made it difficult to be a more active fan for his grandchildren at their sports games. After he retires, Raul plans on spending more time with those grandchildren, playing golf, boating, continuing to play the timbales, traveling, enjoying a good cigar now and then and sharing his "to do" list with his wife Debra.