



Oro Loma Sanitary District  
2600 Grant Avenue  
San Lorenzo, CA 94580

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION  
From the Board, management,  
and staff of Oro Loma —  
Happy Holidays!

## Spotlight on Excellence: Becki Maier



Becki Maier's official title is "Information Systems Technician." What that means is that Becki keeps things running. It's Becki's job to see that all preventative and corrective work orders

necessary to keep the plant and administration building in good condition have been issued. She then tracks and finally closes out those orders. All of that information goes into a database so Becki, and the District, know what needs to be done, is being done, and has been done. Another database that Becki maintains is a catalogue of all the District's computers, printers, and software.

In addition to keeping track of everything needed to keep the plant and administration building up and running, Becki is administrative assistant to the Director of Water Quality Services. She also provides administrative support to the operations and maintenance departments. In these capacities, she gets to wear the hat of a general assistant, helping with research and preparing charts and graphs and performing all types of clerical jobs. And her duties don't stop there. In fact, at one time or another, Becki has assisted every department in the District.

Becki has been with the District for two years. Before that, she lived in Pomona in southern California and worked for an architectural firm. She is a single mom with a toddler named Kaden. Her free time is devoted to Kaden, taking him to the zoo or park and generally enjoying the antics of an active two-year-old.

## Backflow Prevention System

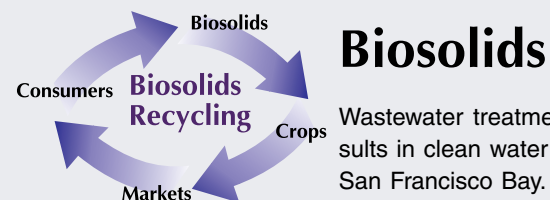
Wastewater flows from homes to the sewer main and then to the treatment plant. At least that is the way sewage *should* flow. Under certain circumstances, it is possible for wastewater to flow back into a home. This is particularly true in hill areas. If there is an extraordinarily high volume of water in the main, or if there is a blockage downstream that forces sewage back upstream, wastewater can back up the lateral and come out of the drains in the house. A "backflow prevention system" works to keep this very unwelcome situation from happening.

The system consists of two parts: the backwater check valve and the overflow device. The backwater check valve has a one-way valve that allows wastewater to flow in only one direction — away from the house. The overflow device provides an emergency escape path should wastewater back up in the lateral.

Both of these devices can be installed on the lateral as one unit. Presently, Oro Loma requires backflow prevention systems on all new construction and on all repairs to home laterals.



A backwater check valve



## Biosolids

Wastewater treatment at the Oro Loma plant results in clean water that is safely discharged into San Francisco Bay. It also results into something else — pathogen-free, useful biosolids that can be recycled as soil amendments. Biosolids are categorized as either class A or B products with class A biosolids meeting extremely high health and safety standards. Oro Loma produces Class A biosolids.

Tilled into soil, biosolids improve agricultural lands. Here, they slowly release nutrients into the ground, reducing or eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers. The biosolids produced at Oro Loma are used as a vegetative cover on top of closed landfills. Biosolids can also promote rapid timber growth and help reclaim land damaged by open mines and gravel pits. For more information: National Biosolids Partnership — <http://biosolids.policy.net/>; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency — [www.epa.gov/owm/](http://www.epa.gov/owm/); California State Water Resources Control Board — <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/programs/biosolids/>.



# ORO LOMA NEWS

San Lorenzo, CA

(510) 276-4700

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

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Issue 30

## Citizens' Advisory Committee Considers Switch to Compressed Natural Gas Recycling Trucks

The Citizens' Advisory Committee, which is made up of representatives of homeowners' associations throughout the District, was originally formed in 1992 to provide citizen input on developing a recycling program for Oro Loma. It was recently reconvened to consider the merits of modifying that program. At issue was the replacement of conventional diesel recycling pickup trucks with Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) trucks.

This meeting allowed the District to present the program and to answer questions from the committee members. The committee heard these advantages of switching to the new trucks:

- Recyclables would no longer need to be sorted. Newspaper, mixed paper, corrugated cardboard, plastic bottles, glass bottles and jars, and aluminum and tin cans would all go into the same recycling cart.
- CNG trucks, which use natural gas as a fuel source, contribute less to air pollution than gasoline or diesel trucks.
- CNG engines are quieter than diesel engines.
- There would be no change to recycling schedules.

However, because the trucks use a remote-controlled automated arm to empty

the recycling carts, residents would need to change the way they place their carts for collection. Residents who presently qualify to receive backyard service would continue to receive this assistance.

Comments from the meeting were considered by the Solid Waste Committee in drafting their recommendation for approval to the full Board.

Input from the public is invaluable in helping the District formulate its policies and programs. Oro Loma is committed to working with the community to devise a cost-effective recycling program that best suits its customers' needs. To voice your opinion on this topic, or any other topic that affects the District, write to the Oro Loma Sanitary District, 2600 Grant Avenue, San Lorenzo, CA 94580, call (510) 276-4700 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, or email [InMyOpinion@oroloma.org](mailto:InMyOpinion@oroloma.org).



CNG trucks use a remote arm to empty recycling carts.

## POLLUTION PREVENTION UPDATES

Improperly disposed of, household hazardous wastes — such as paint, solvents, cleaners, automotive products, and pesticides — cause major pollution to the environment. Oro Loma customers can safely dispose of these and other toxic chemicals through the Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Program and by recycling used motor oil. Are you familiar with these programs? Would you like to learn more? Please help us tailor our pollution prevention outreach material to meet your needs by taking the simple five-minutes survey that is posted on the District Web site at [www.oroloma.org](http://www.oroloma.org). Working together, we can help prevent pollution and keep the Bay and our environment clean and

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## 2002-2003 Calendars Delivered Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest Announced



Over 25,000 free 15-month 2002-2003 Oro Loma calendars have been delivered to schools throughout the District. That's enough for every student in Oro Loma. These calendars feature a selection of winning entries from the Oro Loma Earth Day

2002 Poster Contest. These colorful calendars

are one way that Oro Loma shows its commitment to the community and to local education. Calendars may also be picked up at the District office at 2600 Grant Avenue, San Lorenzo.

As it did last time, this year's calendar contains an entry form for the Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest.

The official kickoff for the Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2003 Contest is January 21, 2003. At that time, free poster paper with an entry form printed on the back will be available at District schools, at Oro Loma, and at Waste Management. Students may also use their own 11x17-inch poster paper and the entry form that is printed in the Oro Loma 2002-2003 calendar,

or the entry form that is available at [www.oroloma.org](http://www.oroloma.org). If either of these entry forms is used, it must be securely taped to the back of the student's poster.

Entries will be accepted from January 21, 2003, until the contest ends on March 17, 2003.

The poster contest is free and open to all students, grades K-12, attending a school in the Oro Loma Sanitary District. Cash prizes of \$500 for first place, \$300 for second place, \$200 for third place, and two prizes of \$100 for honorable mention will be awarded in each of six grade groups. Matching cash prizes will also be awarded to the winning students' schools.

This is the ninth year in a row that Oro Loma and Waste Management have sponsored the contest.

The theme of the Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest is "Don't Break the Chain — Be a Link! Buy Recycled." Oro Loma residents are doing a great job recycling. Now, we need to show why it is important to continue that process by purchasing products made with recycled content.

The contest slogan was chosen from entries submitted by employees of Oro Loma and Waste Management.

For more information on the contest, visit [www.oroloma.org](http://www.oroloma.org) or call (510) 613-2855.



## Ask Sam

Dear Sam,

I know it's important to buy things made with recycled material, and I want to help, but I'm just a kid, what can I do?

*Want to Help in Oro Loma*

Dear Want to Help,

It's great you want to help keep the recycling loop going by purchasing items made with recycled content. You might think that because you're a kid and don't have much money to spend on your own, you can't make much of a difference. That's not true! If you know what to look for when making purchases, you can let others know, too. Products made with recycled content are everywhere — at home, in your family's garden, at school, in the playground, and even in the clothing we wear. Here are some examples: cereal boxes, cardboard egg cartons, bath and facial tissue, paper towels, aluminum beverage cans, glass bottles and jars, and tin cans. Even some shoes, fleece jackets, and gloves are made with recycled plastic and so are Frisbees and pens.

Be sure to look for this symbol:

This shows the product is made with recycled materials.

Want to find out more about buying recycled? Visit [http://www.metrokc.gov/dnr/kidsweb/buying\\_guide\\_main.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/dnr/kidsweb/buying_guide_main.htm)

P.S. Be sure to enter the Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest: "Don't Break the Chain — Be a Link! Buy Recycled."



## RECYCLE YOUR HOLIDAY TREE

### What?

- Green trees only
- Lengths of 6 feet or under
- No snow flocking
- No tinsel
- No ornaments
- No tree stands or nails

*Note: Flocked trees cannot be recycled. However, they will be picked up at no additional cost January 6-17, 2003.*

### When?

- January 6-17, 2003**, on your regular collection day.

### Where?

- At the curb, next to your green cart.

*After January 17, trees will not be collected curbside. To recycle green trees after this date, cut them up and place them in your green cart. Flocked trees will not be picked up after January 17.*



## The "Eye" Gets a Lift



*A tractor with a scissor mechanism allows the omni-eye to inspect large diameter pipes.*

cleaning equipment or it must maneuver on its own through the line. Until recently, it has been difficult to inspect larger pipes up to 66" in diameter, since the camera could only operate on the bottom of the pipe.

That problem has been solved with

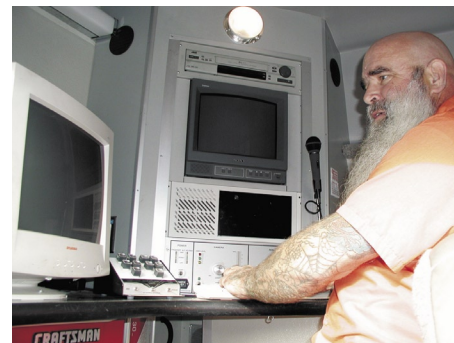
the addition of a new, large-diameter,

four-wheel-drive, remote-controlled tractor.

This tractor has a scissor mechanism that raises the camera up to the top of the pipe above the flow line. In addition, the District has upgraded the software that analyzes the information gathered by the camera. The video can now be digitized so that individual images and short clips can be incorporated into an inspection report. The report includes not only printed stills of the pipe, but also descriptions of the line's condition and detailed locations of each inspection site. The information is added to a database so that after an inspection is complete, the District will have

a complete picture of the system's condition and will be able to access the data by, among other things, date, address, map coordinates, and operation performed.

The new tractor and software program join the District's other top-of-the-line preventative equipment that includes a rodder (a giant roto-rooter that clears pipes of roots and other debris) and three hydrojetters (giant water jets that clean the lines). A crew of six operates all of this equipment. The tools, however, would be useless without the crew's expertise and dedication.



*The omni-eye van contains all the computer equipment needed to control the camera and generate reports.*



*The omni-eye being eased down a manhole*

In 1993, the District purchased its first "Omni-Eye" camera to remotely video inspect the almost 300 miles of District sewer line. It takes about two and a half years to inspect all of the District's lines. The information collected has allowed Oro Loma to design cost-effective rehabilitation and replacement programs, including the recently completed Lewelling and Bayfair sewer line projects.

To inspect a pipe, the camera must either be pushed in front of

## resident's Message

This year has gone by very quickly. It seems like just yesterday we honored the winners of the Oro Loma Earth Day 2002 Poster Contest and now we are getting ready for the 2003 contest. A new school year has started, and the holidays are fast approaching.

The year has been a busy one for Oro Loma. The Oro Loma Earth Day 2002 Poster Contest was a great success. Over 2,500 entries were submitted, and 30 prizes totaling \$7,200 were awarded to students. Matching prizes were presented to the winning students' schools, bringing the total cash prizes to \$14,400. A selection of the winning posters was featured in the 15-month Oro Loma 2002-2003 calendar. Twenty-five thousand of these free calendars have been distributed to schools throughout the District.

A major plant addition that will replace existing sedimentation tanks with three new ones and restore Oro Loma's treatment capacity at 20 million gallons of wastewater a day is well underway. The distinguished engineering firm of HDR/Dodson has been chosen to provide design plans and specifications for the upgrade. The design phase of the project should be completed by the end of 2003. After that, a public request for construction bids will be issued. Service will not be disrupted at any time.

Oro Loma has one of the most successful recycling programs in the Bay Area. Our diversion rate — the percent of material that is recycled rather than sent to landfill — well exceeds the state-mandated levels of 50 percent and is one of the highest in the area. Oro Loma residents have shown their commitment to the environment by their enthusiastic response to the District's curbside recycling program. The District is now considering a modification to that program that will carry new benefits to residents, but will also entail changes in the way carts must be placed for pickup. The District has reconvened the Citizens' Advisory Committee to discuss the benefits and changes that would be necessary and to provide feedback from the community. (See article on page one.) As always, the District values your opinion. Please feel free to call, write, or email us at:

**Phone:** (510) 276-4700,

Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

**Write:** Oro Loma Sanitary District, 2600

Grant Avenue, San Lorenzo, CA 94580

**Email:** [InMyOpinion@oroloma.org](mailto:InMyOpinion@oroloma.org)