



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

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION  
Oro Loma sewer rates  
remain the lowest in  
Alameda County

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
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# ORO LOMA NEWS

San Lorenzo, CA

(510) 276-4700

www.roloma.org

Summer 2003

Issue 32

## The Green Circle

The long days of summer mean extra time in the garden—cutting, pruning, digging, making your yard a show-place. Did you know the plant trimmings you put in your green recycling cart are part of a green circle that can make



cover. The rest go to compost facilities in the Central Valley and Marin where natural processes turn the yard trimmings back into useful soil amendments.

your garden even more beautiful and productive?

Green waste from Oro Loma goes to the Davis Street Recycling and Transfer Station. There it is cleaned, screened, and ground into small pieces. Some of the trimmings are used as biomass fuel for power generators; some for landfill

posts from green waste, along with mulch and other soil products, are available for sale from the Davis Street Recycling and Transfer Station. Visit [www.dsgardencenter.com](http://www.dsgardencenter.com) for a full description and cost of the products available, or call (510) 638-2303.

Happy gardening!

Residential green waste is collected every week in the green recycling cart on the same day as trash.

**Items accepted:** Plant and grass clippings; weeds and roots; leaves, twigs, and branches up to 4-feet in length and less than 6-inches in diameter; untreated wood, wood chips, bark, and sawdust.

**Items NOT accepted:** Fruits and vegetables; rocks, dirt, and concrete; pressure-treated and painted wood; plastic bags; palm leaves and cactus.

## Spotlight on Excellence: Arlene Wong



For the eighth year in a row, the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded Oro Loma the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the District's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The award recognizes excellence in the area of accounting and financial reporting by a government agency. The GFOA is a nonprofit association serving more than 13,500 government finance professionals, and its choice of Oro Loma to receive its highest award was based on the District's ability to fully disclose and clearly communicate the District's financial position to its readers.

The GFOA also recognized Arlene Wong, Oro Loma accountant, with an Award of Financial Reporting Achievement for her part in assisting Oro Loma's Accounting Manager in the preparation of the District's annual report. A native of Hong Kong, Arlene received her MBA from Hayward State University while working at Oro Loma. Her duties include general accounting functions — preparing financial statements, the payroll, and accounts receivable. She also assists in the preparation of the District's budget and the annual audit. The fact that she loves her work is shown in how well she does it.

When not at work, Arlene is with her family — husband Chris, son Jonathan (age 3), and daughter Praise (age 1). Playing the piano, especially at church, provides another source of joy in Arlene's rich and full life.

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## Oro Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant — Preserving a Vital Resource



These 26 members of the treatment plant crew represent 184 years of experience and dedication.

Every day we use water to drink, to cook, to clean, and to irrigate our lawns and gardens. We seem to have an endless supply of it. But we don't. All the water on this planet today is the same water that was here millions of years ago. It is all we will ever have,

and we need to take care of it for ourselves and for our future generations.

Wastewater from homes, factories, schools, and businesses is treated at the Oro Loma Sanitary District so it can be safely released back into San Francisco Bay. It is the responsibility of the District's wastewater treatment plant and its crew to do the job. The facility, which is located at the foot of Grant Avenue in San Lorenzo, uses physical, mechanical, and biological processes to clean the wastewater until, when released, the water is cleaner than the surrounding bay.

Three hundred miles of sewer lines and 14 lift stations carry 15,000,000 gallons of wastewater a day to the treatment plant. There, through a series of sedimentation and aeration tanks, the water is cleaned and chlorinated to remove harmful pathogens. Sludge

from sedimentation tanks goes to a digester for processing at 98 degrees Fahrenheit for 16 days. The clean biosolids that result are useful as soil amendments in landscaping, and gas from the digesters is used to generate 90 percent of the plant's electrical power requirements.

Keeping such a large and complicated process working smoothly and without interruption takes the skill and dedication of sanitary engineers, chemists, industrial waste inspectors, collection workers, mechanics, systems operators, and maintenance workers. Oro Loma is proud of its exceptional plant and collections crew, which has received numerous awards and commendations. Honored as California State Mechanic of the Year, Oro Loma mechanic Prabha Karan is the latest in a long line of recipients of such awards. His story is on page 3.

An interactive diagram of the wastewater treatment process at Oro Loma will soon be on the Oro Loma Web site. Be sure to look for it at [www.roloma.org](http://www.roloma.org).



Keeping San Francisco Bay clean and healthy.



## Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest Winners Announced

See page 3.





# Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest Winners

For the Ninth Straight  
Year, Oro Loma and  
Waste Management Honor  
Poster Contest Winners



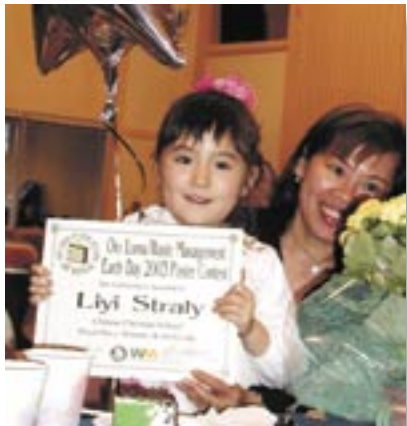
The beautiful San Leandro Marina Community Center was the site of this year's Oro Loma Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest Awards Ceremony, which was held on May 13. The awards ceremony honored the 30 winners of the 2003 poster contest and their schools. Cash prizes and certificates were presented to the students and matching cash awards were then given to the winning students' schools. A small reception followed the ceremony.

This is the ninth year that Oro Loma and Waste Management teamed up to jointly sponsor the contest. The contest was open to every student in grades K-12 attending any of the 32 schools located in the Oro Loma Sanitary District. There were six grade groups and five prizes in each grade group.

Each year, a different contest slogan is chosen that highlights some aspect of recycling. Posters are judged first on the ability to clearly interpret and communicate the contest slogan, then on creativity, and finally, on artistic skill. For the Earth Day 2003 Contest, students were asked to show why it is important to continue the recycling loop by purchasing products made with recycled content. The slogan, "Don't Break the Chain—Be a Link! Buy Recycled," was chosen from suggestions submitted by Oro Loma and Waste Management employees.

Over 2,800 entries were submitted in this year's contest, making it one of the largest in the contest's history. Choosing from among so many creative and wonderful posters was very difficult. Final judging fell to three highly qualified members of the local artistic community: Domingo Daquiaoag, Art Educator at the Sun Galley in Hayward; Diana Lynn, Director of Exhibitions, Green Shutter Gallery in Hayward; and Banning Sentor, Vice President of the Hayward Art Council. Oro Loma appreciates the effort of every student who entered a poster and every teacher, parent, coordinator, and school official who encouraged those students.

A selection of winning posters will be highlighted in the upcoming 15-month Oro Loma 2003-2004 calendar, which will be distributed free to every student in the District. The calendar will also contain information on the Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2004 Poster Contest.



Counterclockwise from top: Winners of the Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest; winning posters were displayed for all to see; a proud winner shows off her certificate; schools received matching cash awards; a large crowd of relatives and guests gathered at the Marina Community Center to honor contest winners; a reception followed the awards ceremony.

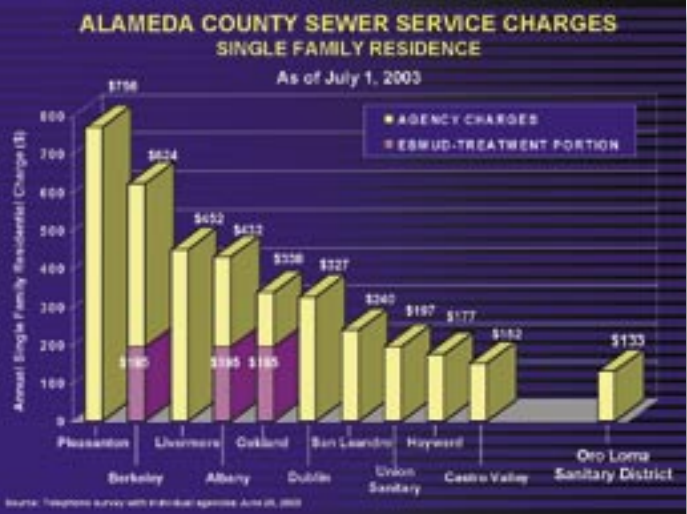
# resident's Message

In case you missed the caption on the front page, that's 184 years of collective service and dedication standing in front of the Oro Loma wastewater treatment plant. The District is proud of its employees, many of whom have been with Oro Loma for many years, starting at an entry-level position and advancing through the ranks by virtue of hard work and training.

Retaining an efficient and dedicated staff is one way Oro Loma ensures a continued level of quality service for the ratepayer. Through cost-cutting measures and sound fiscal planning, the District has not increased rates for twelve years. As the chart to the right shows, Oro Loma rates are the lowest in Alameda County.

However, in order to pay the costs of meeting upcoming, stricter regulatory standards for wastewater collection and treatment, and increased operating costs, the District must impose an annual \$20 residential sewer service rate increase this fiscal year. This is the first increase since 1991.

The decision to increase sewer rates was a difficult one for the Board, but it was required by sound fiscal planning. The Board remains dedicated to providing Oro Loma customers with the best possible service at the lowest possible cost.



## Oro Loma Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest Winners

| PRIZE |           | NAME  | GRADE             | SCHOOL | TEACHER              |                           |
|-------|-----------|-------|-------------------|--------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| K-1   | First     | \$500 | Supriya Kazi      | 1st    | Challenger           | Ms. Williams              |
|       | Second    | \$300 | Adam Totah        | K      | Dayton               | Mrs. Burke                |
|       | Third     | \$200 | Liyi Straly       | 1st    | Chinese Christian    | Mrs. Ong                  |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Johnathan Chan    | 1st    | Dayton               | Mrs. Hugenberger          |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Yash Datt         | K      | Challenger           | Ms. Balaji,<br>Ms. Garcia |
| 2-3   | First     | \$500 | Eric Frey         | 3rd    | St John's Elementary | Mr. Abando                |
|       | Second    | \$300 | Allen Munoz       | 3rd    | Colonial Acres       | Ms. Mckinstry             |
|       | Third     | \$200 | Kimberly Ruiz     | 3rd    | Fairview School      | Mrs. Rego                 |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Paula Villafuerte | 3rd    | Bay Elementary       | Mr. Christy               |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Katie Lockwood    | 3rd    | Dayton               | Mrs. Herts                |
| 4-5   | First     | \$500 | Ryan Fong         | 5th    | Dayton               | Ms. Craig                 |
|       | Second    | \$300 | Michelle Rojo     | 4th    | Del Ray Elementary   | Ms. Nelson                |
|       | Third     | \$200 | Joseph Wildman    | 5th    | Lorenzo Manor        | Ms. Yamashita             |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Anna Gaspar       | 5th    | Assumption           | Mrs. Sweeny               |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Rashaad Hussain   | 5th    | Dayton               | Ms. Craig                 |
| 6-8   | First     | \$500 | Wendy Chau        | 6th    | Chinese Christian    | Mr. Fong                  |
|       | Second    | \$300 | Daniel Price      | 8th    | Bohannon Middle      | Ms. Dean                  |
|       | Third     | \$200 | Sarah Lee         | 8th    | Washington Manor     | Mrs. Heath                |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Amanda Encelan    | 7th    | St. Joachim          | Mr. Stambaugh             |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Angela Wong       | 8th    | Washington Manor     | Mr. McLens,<br>Ms. Rouse  |
| 9-10  | First     | \$500 | Lisa Ho           | 10th   | Arroyo HS            | Mr. Ironside              |
|       | Second    | \$300 | Armida Maria      | 9th    | Hayward HS           | Ms. Carrai                |
|       | Third     | \$200 | Leeza Bieschke    | 9th    | Arroyo HS            | Ms. Rodriguez             |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Jeffrey Geronimo  | 9th    | Arroyo HS            | Ms. Brunei                |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Anny Li           | 10th   | San Leandro HS       | Mr. Ocon                  |
| 11-12 | First     | \$500 | Rachelle Cayan    | 12th   | San Leandro HS       | Mr. Laughlin              |
|       | Second    | \$300 | Julio Diaz        | 11th   | San Leandro HS       | Ms. Burger                |
|       | Third     | \$200 | Richard Arrizon   | 12th   | San Leandro HS       | Mr. Laughlin              |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Johanna Sayo      | 12th   | San Leandro HS       | Ms. Burger                |
|       | Hon. Men. | \$100 | Jenny Garcia      | 12th   | Redwood Christian    | Mr. Lapum                 |

## Oro Loma Employee State Mechanic of the Year

For ten years in a row, the District has won awards from the prestigious California Water and Environmental Association (CWEA) for excellence in wastewater collection and treatment. This is the first year, though, that an Oro Loma employee has had the distinction of winning Best Mechanic at both the local San Francisco Bay Section and at the California State level.

Prabha Karan, an Oro Loma plant mechanic with over ten years of service with the District, had to compete with the best mechanics from 18 local treatment plants and 300 statewide member plants to win the award. Prabha's duties include maintaining all the pipelines and pumps needed to keep wastewater flowing through the plant. It's often a messy job, but Prabha is more than up to the task.

To win the award, Prabha was judged not only on ability, skill, and performance, but also on his volunteer efforts in educating and training other Plant Operators.

Prabha started his career with Oro Loma as a Plant Operator Grade 1. He is now a Mechanic Grade 3 and plans to take the required course work and testing to advance to Grade 4, the highest grade possible. No one doubts he'll be able to do it!

