



ORO LOMA NEWS

San Lorenzo, CA

(510) 276-4700

www.oro-loma.org

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Issue 33

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Bulky Pickup and Recycling Services Expanded in 2004 No Rate Increase

In this period of economic difficulty that many Californians are experiencing, the Oro Loma Sanitary District is pleased to present its customers with a double helping of good news. Starting March 1, 2004, two important pickup and recycling services will be expanded AND there won't be a rate increase for these services. Both the bi-weekly recycling collection program and the annual bulky waste pickup will be expanded to better meet the needs of District customers.

NEW! Oro Loma to Switch to CNG Trucks

The Citizens' Advisory Committee, originally formed in 1992 to help develop a recycling program for Oro Loma residents, met again last year to consider a change to that program. At issue was the switch from conventional diesel trucks to environmentally friendly Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) trucks. After hearing the advantages the switch provided for District customers, the committee gave its approval for the change and the full Board has accepted their recommendation. The

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NEW! Two Bulky Waste Pickups a Year

The popular annual bulky waste pickup that Oro Loma residential customers have enjoyed since 1997 is going to get twice as good in 2004. Starting then, the number of pickups per calendar year goes from one to two. There is no increase in garbage and recycling fees for this additional pickup.

Other aspects of the program will remain the

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2003-2004 Calendars Delivered

In October, 23,000 free 15-month 2003-2004 Oro Loma calendars were delivered to schools throughout the District. These calendars feature a selection of winning entries from the Oro Loma Earth Day 2003 Poster Contest and show why it is important to continue the recycling loop by buying products made with recycled content. 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.

Included in the calendar is an entry form for the Oro Loma Earth Day 2004 Poster Contest. Winning posters from the 2004 contest may be featured in a 2004-2005 Oro Loma calendar.



Oro Loma Earth Day 2004 Poster Contest Marks Ten Years of Commitment to Students and District Schools

The Oro Loma Earth Day 2004 Poster Contest is set to kick off January 20, 2004. This will be the tenth year in a row that Oro Loma and Waste Management have teamed up to sponsor the contest. Over the years, students have been awarded cash prizes for exploring such themes as: recycling in Oro Loma, environmental awareness, keeping the recycling loop going, recycling into the 21st century, having fun while recycling, the history of recycling, and buying products made with recycled material. Oro Loma is proud of the support the matching cash prizes provide District schools, especially in this era of education cutbacks. The real value of the contest, however, lies in what the students learn while researching the contests' themes and what messages they bring back to their families and the community.

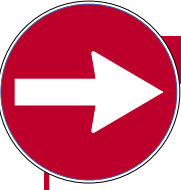
Last year, District students submitted nearly 3,000 posters on the theme, "Don't Break the Chain — Be a Link! Buy Recycled." This year, Oro Loma is asking students to do something a little different. Students must still create a poster, but first they must finish the phrase, "When I recycle, I..." to create their own slogan. Then, they must design a poster based on their slogan. What happens when you recycle? How do you help the environment and your community? What resources do you save? What kind of example do you set? Do you have fun? These are the kinds of questions we hope students will investigate.

The 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. Matching cash prizes will also be awarded to the winning students' schools. In addition, a Certificate of Merit will be given to the 15 finalists in each grade category who do not win a cash prize. Displays of winning and finalist entries may be shown in District libraries, businesses, and official buildings. A selection of winning posters may be featured in the Oro Loma 2004-2005 calendar.

Starting January 20, 2004, free poster paper with an entry form printed on the back may be picked up by students at their schools, at Waste Management's Oakland office (172 98th Avenue) or its Hayward office (22770 Main Street), and at the Oro Loma Sanitary District Office (2600 Grant Avenue, San Lorenzo). Students may also use the entry form that is printed in the Oro Loma 2003-2004 calendar or one that is downloaded from the District's Web site, as long as the form is firmly attached to poster paper that is exactly 11x17-inches. The contest ends March 15, 2004.

For more information, visit www.oroloma.org or call the contest hotline at (510) 613-2855.





Slow for the Cone Zone

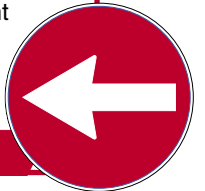
You've seen them out in the middle of the street, the guys with the bright orange or lime yellow jackets and the big Oro Loma logo on their backs, working on sewer lines. You've seen their trucks, too, the ones with the same big Oro Loma logo on the side. What you might have missed seeing are the rows of orange cones they set around their truck or the arrows directing traffic around the truck. Maybe you were going a little too fast or you were distracted. Maybe you weren't expecting to see the crew, right there on a street you drive every day. Or, maybe, when you saw that arrow, you just couldn't quite believe it was meant for you. Whatever your reason, by not slowing down and following the directional cones and arrows, you place the crew's safety, and your own, at risk. And you are breaking the law.

Every business day of the year, Oro Loma has three teams out working. They are cleaning, repairing, and recording the condition of the District's over 300-mile



long wastewater collection system. Most of this work must be done in the streets where the sewer access covers are located. These are the same streets that carry busy traffic. To accommodate drivers and to cause the least possible disruption or traffic congestion, crews often start working as early as 5:00 a.m.

The cones and arrows they set up before starting to work are meant to provide them with a zone of protection, but they are also meant to safely conduct traffic around an obstacle in the street. The crew is trained to direct traffic in the safest, most convenient way possible. Trust them to know what they are doing. Slow down when you see the cones, and if you are unsure which way to go, ask one of the crew for instructions. Never cross over the median into oncoming traffic, unless directed to do so by a member of the work crew. And when you go through, you might consider thanking them for doing such a great job.



Sewer Line Vandalism

Ah, the sound of rushing water. Ah, the temptation to throw something into the water. Ah, the problems this can cause.

We've all been there as kids — fascinated by water, throwing things into rivulets created by rain or a backyard hose. Maybe we made a dam to see the water change course and overflow. What is good, clean (well, maybe not so clean) fun with a backyard hose is something entirely different when it comes to sewer lines.

Because of its ongoing maintenance and repair program, Oro Loma has an excellent record of preventing sewer main backups and overflows. But overflows do occur, and when they do, they can cause considerable damage to surrounding homes, businesses, and the environment. All too often, these blockages are

deliberate, caused by vandals throwing objects down manholes. In fact, in the last two years, the biggest sewer main overflows in Oro Loma have been caused by just such destructive behavior.

Maintenance crews have found everything from tree trunks to boulder-sized rocks to 2x4 lumber and fence posts in the sewers. These things didn't get there by themselves. They were deliberately thrown in with the intent to block water running through the sewers. Crews have also found firecrackers and cherry bombs, which, had they exploded, could have ignited methane gas in the sewers. These are dangerous situations, not childhood pranks and Oro Loma will hold individuals responsible for the damage they cause by deliberately blocking or tampering with sewer mains. In addition to causing damage to District property and surrounding areas, anyone attempting to remove a District manhole cover puts himself or herself in grave personal danger.

Approximately 10 percent of Oro Loma sewer lines run through easements on private property. This means District wastewater flows through about 30 miles of private backyards, athletic fields, schoolyards, and industrial lots. Someone intending to vandalize the sewer lines may think they won't be discovered in such areas. As an Oro Loma customer, you can help by calling (510) 276-4700 to report suspicious behavior around manholes. You would be doing everyone a favor.

New CNG Trucks continued from page 1

new program is scheduled to start March 1, 2004.

The new program includes:

- All recyclable materials — including newspaper, mixed paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, glass bottles and jars, and aluminum and tin cans — go into a single cart. Customers no longer need to sort these items.
- The CNG trucks, which use natural gas, contribute less to air pollution than gasoline or diesel trucks.
- CNG engines are quieter than diesel engines.
- Recycling schedules will remain the same.
- Residents who presently qualify for backyard service will continue to receive this assistance.
- There is no increase in recycling rates to customers. Garbage rates will continue to only be subject to Consumer Price Index adjustments.

Since the CNG trucks use an automated arm to pick up the recycling cart, the cart needs to be placed in the street by the curb for collection. For uniformity and convenience, this will also be the new location for garbage and green waste carts. Details of the CNG program, including the new setout guidelines, will be sent to District customers. Look for future newsletter articles for updates on this exciting new program.

The weekly collection of garbage and green waste, which use one-pass trucks, will not change. Used motor oil will continue to be picked up weekly.



With the new CNG trucks, all recyclable materials go into one cart.

New Bulky Waste Pickups continued from page 1

same, including which items are accepted and which items are not accepted for pickup. Pickup is by appointment only. Call Waste Management at (510) 613-8710 at least two weeks in advance to schedule your date. Below is a list of what is and what is not accepted for bulky waste pickup.

Items That Are Accepted For Pickup

- Trash in bags or disposable cartons (up to 2 cubic yards, which is approximately 16 large trash bags, or a stack 3'x3'x6')
- Bundled tree limbs, brush, etc. (not more than 4' in length and 6" in diameter)
- Passenger car tires (up to 4)
- Household furniture (up to 3 large items)
- Large appliances (up to 3)

Items That Are Not Accepted

- Rocks, dirt, and concrete
- Any single item over 75 lbs

Hazardous materials, such as pesticides, paint, solvents, gasoline, antifreeze, and batteries. Call (800) 606-6606 for drop-off locations and times and for further information on safe disposal of these items.

Information is also available on the Web at www.household-hazwaste.org.

Before throwing out useful items from your garage or basement, consider donating them to charity or holding a garage sale. Old magazines and newspapers can be recycled, as can corrugated cardboard and many types of plastic and metal containers. For a complete list of what is accepted for recycling pickup visit www.oroloma.org.



Expanded Web Site Launched

Want to find a newsletter article from 2002 or do you need to know which permits you need to fix your sewer lateral? Want to find out how the wastewater treatment works and see some really cool video clips on key treatment processes? How about job openings at Oro Loma or the minutes of the last Board meeting? All these and more — including resources for kids, pollution prevention, residential and commercial recycling, and feedback form — can be found on the new, updated Oro Loma Web site at www.oroloma.org. Use the search feature to find information using key words or see what is on the entire site using the site map.

Be sure to visit the contest page for information on the Oro Loma Earth Day 2004 Poster Contest and to download an entry form.



POLLUTION PREVENTION

FOG

Unlike a mist that drifts in and out, then disappears, **FOG** (fat, oil, grease) sticks around, clogging plumbing, the lateral that connects a home or business to the main sewer line, and, finally, the sewer itself. When a sewer main gets clogged, it can overflow, sending wastewater back into homes and businesses or into storm drains that empty directly into the Bay.

In order to prevent these overflows, restaurants are required to install grease interceptors on their plumbing system. These interceptors are multi-chamber units that capture fats, oils, and grease before the wastewater leaves the restaurant. The devices are sized according to how much FOG the establishment produces. In order to maintain proper functioning, interceptors must be cleaned by a professional service on a regular basis. Failure to maintain the interceptor can lead not only to a backup, but also to unhealthy mold and fungus growth. Steam cleaning or any type of cleaning that forces the grease past an interceptor is strictly prohibited.



Homeowners can prevent grease blockages in their sewer lateral by first, never pouring grease or oil down a drain. Instead, pour these liquids into a can or jar that can be sealed and then disposed of in the trash. Second, wipe greasy pots and pans with a paper towel before washing them by hand or placing them in the dishwasher.

To learn more about pollution prevention, visit the new Oro Loma Web site at

www.oroloma.org.



President's Message

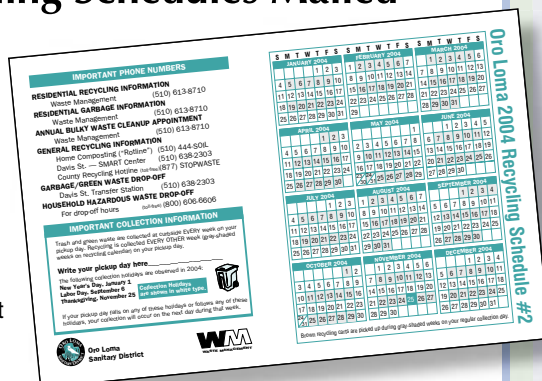
2003 has been a challenging year for the District. The year began with a January order from the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board (SFR-WQCB) requiring the District to upgrade its treatment plant process and capability. The District had already begun the upgrade process based on incremental improvements tied to growth. The Regional Board's order expanded and accelerated the process, which increased an \$8 million project to a projected cost of \$26.5 million. By midsummer, the impact of the State's financial crisis had trickled down to local government. Oro Loma was notified that the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), which regulates the sewer industry, was slated for state budget reductions. In order to implement budget reductions, the legislature and Governor Davis signed SB10X into law, which allowed regulatory agencies to increase regulatory fees charged directly to sanitary districts to make up for the State budget shortfall. There is no cap or official oversight on how much these fees are increased. As a result, there is no reduction in State spending, the District's costs of operation go up, and ultimately, the cost increases are merely shifted by the State to you, the customer.

In order to fund the expanded and accelerated treatment plant process upgrade project, the District intended to use low-cost loans from the State of California Revolving Loan Fund. By September, the District was verbally approved for the loans, and then as the gubernatorial recall election drew nearer, the State suddenly suspended making any new loans for an indefinite period. Regardless of this development, the District is still under a State order to move forward with the project.

During the last 10 years, your Board has directed the District to accrue prudent financial reserves by reducing costs. Thankfully, this has positioned the District to have sufficient reserves to pay for large capital projects. However, other costs such as medical insurance, general liability, and other costs of operation are also rising. In order to meet these challenges, On July 1, 2003 Oro Loma imposed the first sewer rate increase since 1991 — a \$20 a year increase for the fiscal year 2003-2004. Even with this increase, Oro Loma's sewer rates of \$133 per year remain the lowest in Alameda County. And, not withstanding the State revolving loan fund situation, the District intends to move forward with this project by using a combination of capital reserves and cash flow to pay the costs. As always, your District is committed to "providing the best possible service at the lowest possible cost."

2004 Recycling Schedules Mailed

The 2004 recycling schedules have been mailed. If you haven't received yours, call Waste Management at (510) 613-8710. Schedules are also available at www.oroloma.org.





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

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US POSTAGE
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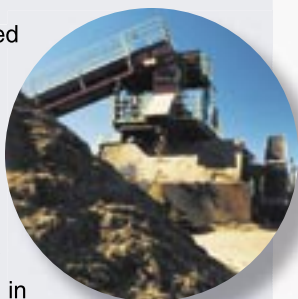


Printed on recycled paper

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
Oro Loma Earth Day 2004
Poster Contest
Kicks off January 20, 2004

RECYCLE YOUR HOLIDAY TREE

Green holiday trees can be turned into useful compost and other beneficial soil amendments. From January 5-16, green, unflocked trees will be picked up when placed next to the green waste cart. (See below for restrictions.) After January 16, cut up tree can be placed in the green waste cart. The trees will be taken to the Davis Street Transfer Station where they will be processed for compost.



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 5-16, 2004.

When?

- 🗑️ **January 5-16, 2004**, on your regular collection day.

Where?

- 🗑️ At the curb, next to your green cart.

After January 16, 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 16.



Spotlight on Excellence Andreea Simion

On September 22, Oro Loma welcomed Andreea Simion as the new Administrative Services Manager for the District. In addition to all Human Resources activities, her duties include employee relations, managing the solid waste and recycling program, and managing the safety and training functions for the District.



Before starting at Oro Loma, Andreea was with the Dublin San Ramon Services District for four years.

Andreea says what attracted her to Oro Loma was the supportive, optimistic attitude of the staff and employees and the professionalism of the agency — and the feeling she could make a positive contribution. Through teamwork and cooperation, Andreea looks forward to streamlining procedures and systems to increase efficiency and ensure the highest level of customer service while making sure employees receive the respect and appreciation they deserve. With an undergraduate degree in chemistry and post-graduate courses in Human Resource Management from UC Berkeley, plus a can-do attitude that believes in hard work, determination, and the value of having fun, Andreea is well qualified to carry out her ambitious plan.

With two young sons (Alexander, 6, and Anthony 3), Andreea has little free time. In the time she has, Andreea and her husband, Bogdan, attend soccer games, Tae Kwan Do practices and occasional trips to the zoo, movies, or the circus — until it's time to start another workweek.