



ORO LOMA NEWS

San Lorenzo, CA

(510) 276-4700

www.oroloma.org

Spring 2006

Issue 39

Board of Directors

Roland J. Dias
President

Frank V. Sidari
Vice President

Howard W. Kerr
Secretary

Herbert G. Crowle
Director

Laython N. Landis
Director

General Manager

Michael C. Cameron

Editor

Andreea Simion

Inside

- Green-Built House
- Second Highest Wastewater Flow in Oro Loma's History
- Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2006 Poster Contest
- Plant Capacity Restoration Project
- Pollution Prevention: Good Grease Solutions
- Spotlight on Excellence: Rodney Smith
- Spotlight on Excellence Correction

Oro Loma Sanitary District
2600 Grant Avenue
San Lorenzo, CA 94580
(510) 276-4700
www.oroloma.org

Questions:
info@oroloma.org

California Universal Waste

What Is Universal Waste?

Many common household items contain hazardous chemicals or heavy metals. These items are known as universal waste. When universal waste is thrown away in the trash, it ends up in the landfill, where it can cause serious environmental damage. As of February 8, 2006, it is illegal in California to dispose of universal waste in the garbage.

Examples of Universal Waste

- **Common Batteries:** AA, AAA, C cell, D cell, and button batteries (e.g. hearing aid batteries) contain corrosive chemicals as well as toxic heavy metals, like cadmium.
- **Fluorescent Tubes and Bulbs and Other Mercury-Containing Lamps:** Fluorescent light tubes and bulbs, high intensity discharge (HID), metal halide, sodium, and neon bulbs contain mercury vapor.
- **Thermostats:** There is mercury inside the sealed glass "tilt switch" of the old style thermostats (not the newer kind).
- **Electronic Devices:** TVs and computer monitors, computers, printers, VCRs, cell phones, telephones, radios, and microwave ovens often contain heavy metals like lead, cadmium, copper, and chromium.
- **Electrical Switches and Relays:** These typically contain about 3.5 grams of mercury each. Mercury switches can be found in some chest freezers, 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 Thermometers:** These typically contain about 0.5 gram of mercury.
- **Non-Empty Aerosol Cans that Contain Hazardous Materials:** Many products in aerosol cans are toxic and many aerosol cans contain flammables as propellants for products like paint.

Proper Disposal of Universal Waste

Oro Loma residents can properly dispose of most Universal Waste, including batteries, florescent bulbs, and other items containing mercury, by bringing them to one of Alameda County's three hazardous waste disposal sites:

Oakland: 2100 East 7th Street

Hayward: 2091 West Winton Avenue

Livermore: 5584 La Ribera Street

For operating hours call (800) 606-6606 or visit www.stopwaste.org

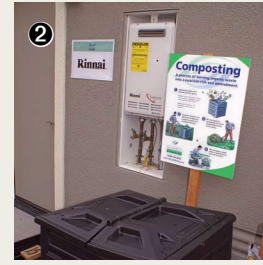
Electronic devices are not accepted at the Alameda County Hazardous Waste Disposal sites. For information on how to recycle these items visit www.stopwaste.org or call (800) 606-6606. TVs, computers, monitors, printers, and up to three large appliances will continue to be collected as bulky waste. District residents are entitled to two free bulky waste pickups a year. To schedule your pickup, call (510) 613-8710 at least two weeks in advance. Aerosol cans that are *completely* empty can be recycled as part of Oro Loma's All-in-One Recycling program.

For questions, call (800) 606-6606 or visit www.stopwaste.org.



Green-Built House

Sunset magazine, in collaboration with the State of California's Sustainable Building Task Force, the City of Palo Alto, the California Integrated Waste Management Board, the California Energy Commission, and Clarum Homes, recently built two demonstration homes to highlight the ease and advantages of using environmentally-friendly products, landscaping, and building techniques. One home was completely furnished with eco-friendly products and the other showcased efficient use of water, energy, materials, and indoor environment.



Featured products and techniques include: **1** Tiles, counter top, and sink basin made from recycled glass; **2** Tankless, on-demand water heater that saves up to 70% in energy and provides endless hot water; Composting and worm bins; **3** Bamboo furniture; **4** Radiant roof barrier sheathing to reflect up to 97% of the sun's heat; **5** Energy-efficient kitchen appliances; counters made with quartz chips; cabinets that use wheatboard, a non-toxic particleboard made from straw waste; **6** Integrated solar cells that look like roofing tiles; **7** Dual-flush toilets that allow a choice of flush volume; **8** Landscaping that features native plants and vegetables grown decoratively in planters manufactured from crushed stone; **9** Furnishings that include area rugs made from recycled soda bottles, chairs made from sustainable wood, bamboo floors, and pollutant-free paints.

To learn more about California's Green Building Program, visit www.ciwmb.ca.gov/greenbuilding or call (916) 341-6500. To view the Enviro-Home™ by Clarum Homes, visit www.clarum.com.

Second Highest Wastewater Flow in Oro Loma's History

The recent pounding rainstorms not only flooded river valleys in Napa and Sonoma counties, they also poured many millions of extra gallons of water into the Oro Loma wastewater treatment plant. During the 24-hour period from December 31, 2005 to January 1, 2006, 56 million gallons of wastewater flowed into the plant. This is the second highest flow in the plant's history. The highest ever flow in Oro Loma history, 75 million gallons, occurred on February 2, 1998.

Rainwater enters the Oro Loma wastewater system through two means—inflow and infiltration. During heavy storms, significant amounts of rain run directly into the sewer mains through air vents in manhole

covers. This is inflow. Infiltration occurs when water percolates into the pipes from surrounding soil. In severe weather like we experienced at the beginning of the year, the ground is super-saturated with water. Earth movement over the years causes small cracks and loosening of joints in pipes, thus allowing water to seep in. Cracks in sewer laterals that lead from individual buildings to the sewer mains also add a significant amount of water to the sewer system during heavy rains.

At high flow levels such as this, the Oro Loma wastewater treatment plant operates at the edge of its capacity. However, the District is pleased to report that no main sewer overflows occurred, and that

the state-mandated effluent standards were met every step of the way. And now, with the Plant Capacity Restoration project well on its way to completion, unusually high flows should no longer be an issue for Oro Loma. One of the main reasons for undergoing this historic project (see page 3) was to address wet weather flow issues and allow for greater operating margins on a daily basis.

Regular servicing and cleaning of the sewer lines, well-maintained pumps and back-up generators, and most of all, a crew of dedicated and experienced professionals allowed Oro Loma to weather a storm that could have had undesirable results.



Too good to waste!

Oro Loma/Waste Management Earth Day 2006 Poster Contest

For the twelfth year in a row, Oro Loma Sanitary District and Waste Management sponsored an Earth Day Poster Contest. The contest was free and open to all students attending a school located in the Oro Loma Sanitary District that is serviced by Waste Management for recycling.

This year's contest slogan was: **Paper—Too Good to Waste!** Students created posters that showed why it is important to reduce, reuse, and recycle paper. A list of cash winners in each grade category will be announced on the contest hotline at (510) 613-2855 and on www.oroloma.org on Earth Day, April 22, 2006. The specific placement of winners within each grade category will be unveiled at an awards

ceremony on May 9, 2006.

Prizes are as follows: First Place \$500, Second Place \$300, Third Place \$200, Honorable Mention (two awarded) \$100. Prizes will be awarded to the winning students in each of six grade groups: K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-10, 11-12. Matching cash prizes will be awarded to the winning students' schools. A Certificate of Merit will be given to the 15 finalists in each grade category who do not win a cash prize.

All winning posters will be printed on the back of the Oro Loma 2006-2007 calendar. A selection of these posters will also be featured on each month.

All posters will be returned to the schools that submitted them.

Stop Junk Mail

It's good to recycle your junk mail.
It's even better to stop getting it.



The Alameda County Waste Management Authority is now offering a "Stop Junk Mail Kit" that includes information on how to stop getting unwanted catalogs, mortgage and credit card offers, sales flyers and coupons. The kit includes two postcards you can send to major direct mail associations to get your name removed from their mailing list. Call toll-free (877) STOPWASTE (786-7927) to get your kit. The information is also available in pdf format at http://www.stopwaste.org/docs/junk-mail_broch4_7-2005.pdf.

PLANT CAPACITY RESTORATION PROJECT TIMELINE

JULY 19, 2004

1,000 DAYS

APRIL 15, 2007



The ambitious plant restoration project that Oro Loma and Castro Valley (which owns 25% of the District's wastewater treatment plant) embarked on in July 2004 is now a little more than half-way through its anticipated 1000 days of construction, and it is 83% complete. This puts the project well ahead of schedule and on budget.

All three new circular clarifiers, which have a diameter of 120 feet and a depth of 18 feet, are complete. The new disinfection channel and connection to the existing disinfection channel are all complete. This new channel system more than doubles Oro Loma's disinfecting capa-

bilities and allows the District to shut down one channel or the other for maintenance and repair.

The massive new pump station still needs some electrical work and piping. This should be finished by April of this year. Then extensive testing of the plant will begin. Testing will be carried out in two phases—operation and stress testing. The District anticipates that the newly restored plant will be fully functional and online by this summer. An open house to celebrate the successful completion of this historic project is planned for fall 2006 or spring 2007. Look for details in upcoming newsletters.

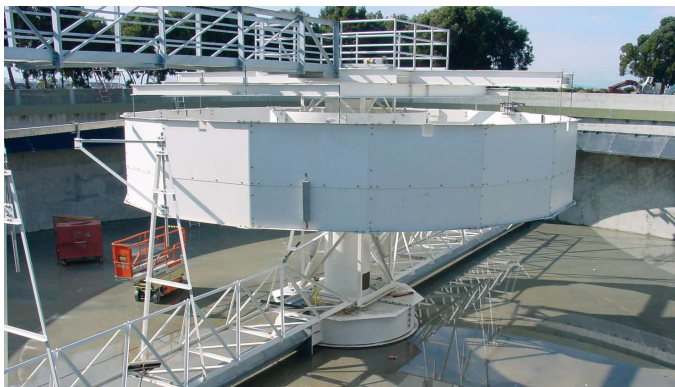
Completion ahead of schedule on such a complex and ambitious project would not have been possible without the successful collaboration between the District and the project's main contractor, Monterey Mechanical of Oakland. Despite encountering unforeseen ob-



One of the two new disinfection channels

stacles 10-50 feet below the surface, and a water table that is only 7-8 feet below the surface, Monterey Mechanical continued to work without delay. When challenged with the need to shut down half of the existing disinfection channel, they worked 10 hours a day, six days a week for seven weeks to create a 48-inch pipe bypass that allowed them to complete work on the new channels in record time.

When complete, the plant will produce treated discharge that meets stringent environmental standards well into the future, both in dry and in wet weather.



One of the three new clarifiers.



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

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
OAKLAND CA
PERMIT NO. 591

Printed on recycled paper

California
Universal
Waste
See page 1

POLLUTION PREVENTION

Good Grease Solutions

Did you know residential cooking fats, oils and grease are recycled at the Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste facilities? If you live in the District, you can drop off used cooking oil and grease for FREE at their facility at 2091 West Winton Ave in Hayward. For a schedule of facility hours, visit www.stopwaste.org.

Cooking oil and grease may seem harmless, but they collect in your household sewer pipes or in the District's main sewer lines when poured down your sink or toilet. In time, the accumulated oil and grease may cause sewer backups and overflows that are not only unsightly and smelly, but can also wreak havoc on local creeks if the sewer overflow ends up in the storm drain system.

Rather than pouring cooking oil and grease into your sink at home, bring them in sealed containers to the Alameda County Hazardous Waste facility. Your cooking oil and grease will be recycled into useful products. Questions? Call Alameda County Hazardous Waste at (800) 606-6606. For more information about the residential cooking oil and grease pollution prevention program, please call Oro Loma Sanitary District at (510) 276-4700.

Spotlight on Excellence: Rodney Smith



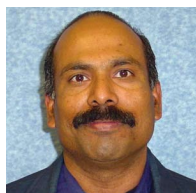
Oro Loma's newest employee, Rodney Smith, took his time before deciding on a career as a plant operator. It wasn't until two years ago that Rod realized his work as a computer specialist—writing programs, setting up and maintaining computer networks—just wasn't as satisfying as it once was. It was then that he started taking classes at the local community college in science, a subject he always loved. There he met a wastewater treatment plant operator who described his job with such enthusiasm—he called himself a hands-on environmentalist—that Rod decided to look into the field himself. And he was hooked.

Rod's position at Oro Loma is a Plant Operator I. As such, he gets experience in many different aspects of plant operations, as he fulfills requirements needed to complete his state-mandated certification. In general, he assists lead operators as necessary. This may include raking the bar screen or operating the belt press or any number of other vital jobs around the plant. His long-term goal is to become as good a plant operator as anyone at Oro Loma.

Rod is married with two grown children and lives in Castro Valley. In his spare time, he likes to ride his motorcycle—not that he has much free time now that he's embarked on a demanding new career.

Spotlight on Excellence Correction

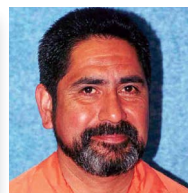
Due to a printing error, the names of the staff featured in "Spotlight on Excellence" in the last issue of *Oro Loma News* were omitted. The photographs and names appear at the right.



Prabha Karan



Scott von der Lieth



Bob Ureste



Chris Brown