



EXPERIENCE MATTERS

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Longtime Public Works employee retires after 25 years on the job



Steve Reichhold on the job.

Photo provided

By Vera Kochan

Not many towns or cities can boast about an employee that's been on the job for 25

years. Moraga's Public Works/Parks Maintenance crew member Steve Reichhold has decided to hang up his safety vest in favor of

retirement.

Reichhold began his career in 1995 at age 37 in Moraga doing grounds work and park maintenance. "There was no special reason for coming to Moraga other than I needed a job," he recalled. "I had done that type of work in Oakland, and before that, I did it as a kid for my parents and grandparents." His position later merged into the Public Works Department where he began working on potholes, litter maintenance and fallen tree removal.

According to his immediate supervisor, Public Works/Parks Maintenance Manager Kyle Salvin, "Steve was a very dedicated worker. The majority of his 25 years of service Steve was tasked with covering the weekend shifts and never missed a day. He supervised the Work Alternative Program (Work Furlough), which at times required him to oversee more than five workers at a time. Not an easy task for one person." Salvin added, "Steve liked to interact with the Moraga residents and valued the relationships he found here," noting that Reichhold

always displayed a kind and gentle manner.

Reichhold remembers many times getting a call late at night or in the early hours of the morning to help during some of Moraga's more recent disasters. "I once had to remove a 60-year-old tree that fell onto St. Mary's Road at 3 a.m. When the first Rheem sinkhole happened I was called to put up pedestrian barricades with the Work Furlough crew. I told them, 'This sidewalk won't be here by tomorrow' – and it wasn't."

Other memorable moments on the job include one of Moraga's wettest winters. "I was told there were 24 mudslides around town," recalls Reichhold. "The bulldozers had to push everything back, and it took days for the dump trucks to get rid of all the mud on the roads. It was the longest two hours of my life standing in the pouring rain holding a sign for drivers to slow down. After that was the Canyon Bridge closure. We had to put up the same kind of barricades as were used for the sinkholes."

Reichhold stayed on the job for so long because he felt

it was a fun place to work, and over the years he grew to think of his co-workers as family: "I feel that I contributed my share. I liked the work, but it got tougher as I got older."

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp stated, "Working for a public agency is truly a life's calling, especially for us in Public Works. For Steve, he has dedicated over 25 years of his professional life to one community, Moraga. This is a rare thing in today's world. Through all kinds of weather, all types of issues and all through the year, Steve dedicated himself to Moraga and its residents. We cannot say enough thanks and appreciation to Steve. We are wishing Steve the best in his well-deserved retirement."

Reichhold plans on keeping busy in a leisurely fashion by doing a lot of hiking, line dancing, biking, reading and possibly RV-ing. And, just so that he doesn't lose the skills he honed for over 25 years, he'll continue to garden around the house.

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