

Safer Utility Maintenance. Less Community Disruption.

How Millbrae Public Works replaced heavy steel road plates with lightweight composite alternatives to improve safety, simplify deployment and reduce road plate noise.

Client: Millbrae Public Works

Location: Millbrae, California

Sector: Utilities

Application: Maintenance, sewer repairs and water main works

Product: LowPro 23/05 Composite Road Plates


WE'VE GOT IT COVERED

CUSTOMER IMPACT



Used daily across Water
& Wastewater operations



No road plate noise complaints
since adoption (8 months)



No cranes or backhoes required
to position plates



Manual installation
by field crews



Reduced disruption
for residents

The Customer

Millbrae Public Works maintains the City's water and wastewater infrastructure, carrying out routine maintenance, sewer repairs and water main works throughout the community.

Maintaining safe traffic flow while minimising disruption to residents is an important part of every excavation project.

The Challenge

Traditional steel road plates had become an accepted part of utility maintenance - but they created operational challenges that extended well beyond simply covering an excavation.

Steel plates required and caused:

- > Backhoes to position and remove
- > Additional equipment mobilisation
- > Heavy suspended loads
- > Increased manual handling risk
- > Noise from passing traffic
- > Complaints from nearby residents

For relatively small maintenance excavations, this often meant deploying large equipment simply to move a road plate.

Some of the benefits of LowPro 23/05 Road Plates:

- ✕ Heavy lifting equipment
- ✕ Boom truck
- ✕ Noise complaints
- ✕ Operational complexity





The Solution

LowPro 23/05 Composite Road Plates

Millbrae Public Works adopted Oxford Plastics' modular LowPro 23/05 composite road plate system for water and wastewater maintenance projects.

Unlike traditional steel plates, the lightweight composite system can be transported in standard utility vehicles and manually installed by field crews, eliminating the need for dedicated lifting equipment.

Its modular design allows crews to quickly configure the plate to suit each excavation while maintaining safe vehicle access throughout the works.

Benefits

- > Manual installation without cranes or backhoes
- > Improved crew safety through reduced heavy lifting
- > Faster deployment and removal
- > Standard utility vehicles instead of heavy plant
- > Significantly quieter under traffic
- > Easily repositioned as work progresses

- ✓ **Manual install**
- ✓ **No lifting equipment**
- ✓ **Reduced noise**
- ✓ **Safer handling**
- ✓ **Operational flexibility**

The Outcome

Safer. Simpler. Quieter.

Millbrae Public Works has seen significant operational improvements since adopting composite road plates.

> **Improved Safety:**

Removing heavy steel plates from routine maintenance has reduced manual handling risks and eliminated the need for suspended loads during many maintenance activities.

> **Faster Operations:**

Crews can transport and install plates using vehicles already assigned to the work, reducing equipment mobilisation and improving productivity.

> **Reduced Community Disruption:**

Perhaps the most noticeable improvement has been the reduction in road plate noise.

According to Millbrae Public Works:

“We haven’t had a single road plate noise complaint in the past eight months.”

> **Greater Operational Flexibility:**

Because the plates can be installed without specialist lifting equipment, crews have greater flexibility to respond quickly to maintenance activities.

Why This Matters?

Municipal utilities are under increasing pressure to:

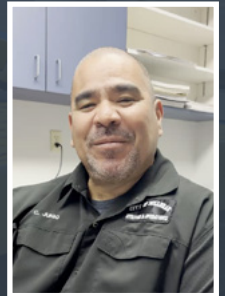
- > **Improve worker safety**
- > **Reduce disruption**
- > **Do more with fewer resources**
- > **Maintain ageing infrastructure**

Millbrae demonstrates how replacing a routine temporary works product can improve operational efficiency without changing how maintenance work is delivered.

“From a safety perspective, they’re lightweight, easy to handle and can be installed by just two people. We don’t need a backhoe or dump truck, which makes the work much simpler and more efficient.”

“These are the best thing we’ve ever bought.”

Chris Junio
Public Works Supervisor
City of Millbrae



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-  804-296-6892 (US)
+44 (0) 1608 678888 (UK)
-  sales@oxfordplastics.com
-  www.oxfordplastics.com



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