

## **A SMOKE-FREE ORION**

**People's Corner (Anonymous) Saturday, May 28, 2011**

**"MMDA enforcers will apprehend persons smoking in public places, public conveyances and along sidewalks of major and secondary roads in the metropolis starting Monday (May 30, 2011), MMDA Chairman Francis Tolentino said, according to the Philippine Star."**

**The public calls on Orion Executives to enforce the Anti-Smoking law in our municipality.**

This is to reiterate the official policy of the Municipal Government of Orion by virtue of Municipal Ordinance No. 08-020-052 of April 29, 2008, that: **"It shall be unlawful to smoke in all public places within the municipality of Orion, except in designated smoking areas... that public places (schools, hospitals, medical clinics, convenience stores, grocery stores, market, restaurants, comfort rooms, sessions hall, and the like) shall be declared as strictly smoke-free areas. It is likewise declared unlawful to smoke cigarette, cigar or pipe in public conveyances (passenger busses, jeepneys, tricycles, and similar vehicles) plying in the Municipality of Orion."**

The Municipal Health Office is the implementing authority and to post the NO SMOKING signs. The following has the vested powers to apprehend violators within their respective jurisdictions: Barangay Chairperson, School Heads and the Orion Philippine National Police (PNP) uniformed personnel.

Will it be too much to ask those officials who were tasked to implement and enforce the policy to ban smoking in public places? Let us joint together and make Orion a smoke-free community. Will it be too much to ask the Chief Executive, who has the command responsibility, to ensure officials in the chain of command adhere to the anti-smoking policy and those non-performers are equally charged for dereliction of duty? Why? The Ordinance is now three years old, nothing has been done about it. Offenders should be made to perform community service instead of fine.