



UNION COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

News Release

Sewer Rats Take Third Place at International Competition

October 10, 2014, Monroe, NC – A team of Union County Public Works employees known as the Sewer Rats took third-place at the Operations Challenge competition Collections System event held in New Orleans last week. Now in its 27th year, the competition was a highly anticipated event of the Water Environment Federation's 87th Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference ([WEFTEC® 2014](#)).

The three-time state champion Sewer Rat team members Josh Carpenter, Matthew Hargett, Josh Griffin and David Denninger competed against 42 hardworking teams from the U.S., Canada and Argentina. As one of the most fun and exciting events on the exhibition floor, Operations Challenge is a unique and fast-paced test of the essential skills needed to operate and maintain wastewater treatment facilities and their collection systems and laboratories—all vital to the protection of public health and the environment.

“The level of professionalism exhibited throughout this event was outstanding,” said Stacie Metzler, Operations Challenge Committee Chair. “What the teams learn here at WEFTEC goes back with them to their own communities, which ultimately benefits society, the environment, and their own careers.”

“The Sewer Rats did Union County proud competing on the world stage in an international competition of utility operations skills,” said Public Works Executive Director Ed Goscicki. “I couldn't be more proud of their performance and professionalism.”

Over the course of nearly three decades, Operations Challenge has steadily grown from the original 22-team event to this year's 43-team, two-division format. Teams are judged on the best combination of precision, speed and safety. The winners are determined by a weighted point system for five events including collection systems, laboratory, process control, maintenance and safety.

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