

2024 WEFTEC 37th Annual Operations Challenge Competition

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Unison Solutions sponsored two teams from Central States Water Environment Association; the Pumpers and the Shovelers.



Operations Challenge is the water sector's best professional development program wrapped up in a competition. This annual competition took place on Monday, October 7th, and Tuesday, October 8th at the WEFTEC water quality event which was held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Operations Challenge competition is a showcase of excellence in wastewater treatment, where skilled teams of professionals compete in a series of timed events. These events simulate real-world challenges faced in the operation and maintenance of wastewater treatment facilities.

Through this competition, participants highlight the critical role of efficient and environmentally responsible wastewater management, fostering camaraderie and promoting best practices within the water sector.

The competition is divided into three divisions based on teams' prior performances.

Division I - Returning teams that were in Division I the previous year. This also includes any returning team that competed in the previous year's Division II Competition and placed in the top three positions overall.

Division II - Returning teams who do not qualify for Division I. This also includes any returning team that competed in the previous year's Division III Competition and placed in the top three positions overall.

Division III - New Teams that have three members who have never competed in WEFTEC Operations Challenge for their current utility. Teams may compete in Division 3 for up to three consecutive years. They may elect to complete in Division 2 if they choose. If a member has previously competed at WEFTEC, but not for their current employer, their team is eligible to compete in Division 3. Any Division 3 Team that wins the top 3 spots overall must move up to Division 2, regardless of years left in Division 3, unless team members change.

The five events that make up Operations Challenge are the ultimate tests of wastewater treatment pros. From pump fixes to lab work, process control, safety checks, and collection system challenges, these events showcase the diverse skills needed for top-tier water sector talent.

Collections Systems

Competitors simulate real-world scenarios by inspecting and maintaining sewer collection systems, highlighting their capacity to prevent and address potential issues in the wastewater network.

Laboratory

In this event, competitors demonstrate their laboratory skills by conducting a series of tests and analyses, ensuring the accurate monitoring and control of wastewater treatment processes.

Vaughan Maintenance

Teams race against the clock to restore a pump to service, testing their ability to swiftly service critical equipment, ensuring uninterrupted wastewater treatment operations.

Process Control

Teams showcase their ability to optimize wastewater treatment processes through precise control and adjustment, emphasizing efficiency and environmental stewardship.

Safety

Safety takes the forefront as teams demonstrate their knowledge and adherence to rigorous safety protocols, ensuring the well-being of both workers and the environment.

2024 Operations Challenge Winners

At an awards ceremony on Tuesday night, Operations Challenge officials announced this year's winners.

Division I Winners

- First Place – Elevated Ops (Rocky Mountain WEA)
- Second Place – Centrifugal Force (WEA of Texas)
- Third Place – Controlled Chaos (WEA of South Carolina)

Division II Winners

- First Place – Bowery Bay Coyotes (New York WEA)
- Second Place – Second City Sewer Crew (Illinois WEA)
- Third Place – Poopa Troopa (Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association)

Division III Winners

- First Place – WEA Pumpers (Central States)
- Second Place – Weir Wolves (WEA of Ontario York)
- Third Place – 26th Ward Notorious BOD (New York WEA)



OPERATIONS CHALLENGE™



1st in Division 3 of
the Process Control



Congratulations to the CSWEA Pumpers for securing 1st place in Division 3 of the Process Control event at this year's WEFTEC Ops Challenge! Your impressive second-place finish in the Laboratory Category is also noteworthy. Well done!