

2025 WEFTEC 38th Annual Operations Challenge Competition

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



Photos courtesy of Eric Lynne – 2025 CSWEA PWO



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.

2025 Operations Challenge Winners

Division I Winners

- First Place – Elevated Ops (Rocky Mountain WEA)
- Second Place – Sewerside Squad (Rocky Mountain WEA)
- Third Place – Double Duty (Rocky Mountain WEA)

Division II Winners

- First Place – Team HRSD (Virginia WEA)
- Second Place – Rising Sludge (New England WEA)
- Third Place – Surge (WEA of South Carolina)

Division III Winners

- First Place – Rowdy Rotifers (Chesapeake WEA)
- Second Place – TRAIblazers (WEA of Texas)
- Third Place – River Rangers (Pacific Northwest CWA)



**OPERATIONS
CHALLENGE™**

Congratulations to the CSWEA Pumpers for achieving the best time in Division 2 of the Lab event at this year’s WEFTEC Ops Challenge! Additionally, congratulations to the Shovelers for finishing with the 4th best time in Division 3 of the Lab event. Your outstanding performances are commendable. Well done!