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**DEP Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators Take First Place In Statewide "Operators' Challenge"**

**Next Stop For Team From Jamaica: National Finals In New Orleans**



The Jamaica Bay Hackleheads

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that a team of sewage treatment workers from the DEP's Jamaica Water Pollution Control Plant have won the statewide "Operators' Challenge" competition and will go on to compete in the national finals in New Orleans in October.

The Operators' Challenge is a competition developed by the Water Environment Federation (WEF) to formally recognize the expertise and skills of treatment plant operators to safely and effectively operate their facilities. The teams of five sewage treatment workers are required to compete in five timed events, testing their skills in pump maintenance and repair, process control, laboratory procedures, safety and emergency procedures and sewer collections systems maintenance. The competition also included an oral question-and-answer session.

"DEP operates 14 water pollution control plants and treats around 1.3 billion gallons of raw sewage everyday," said Commissioner Ward. "DEP's employees at these plants are a highly specialized group of workers who perform a vital service that contributes to the health and safety of all New

Yorkers. It's nice to have a way to recognize their unique contribution to the City."



The Bowery Boys

Every year, the DEP holds its own local Operators' Challenge to determine which DEP teams will represent the City in statewide competition. The top two teams from local competition compete at the state level. The Jamaica team – known as the Jamaica Bay Hackleheads – placed first in this year's local contest; the team from the Bowery Bay treatment plant in Queens – called the Bowery Boys – placed second. The Bowery Boys came in third in the statewide competition, which was held on June 8 th at the Wind Watch Wyndham Hotel in Happaug, Long Island.

The five members of the first place team, who all work at the Jamaica treatment plant in Queens , are: George Sullivan III, Kevin McCormick, Steve Terwilliger, Steve Moltz and Joe Atkins.

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