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Department of Environmental Protection Wins Outstanding Achievement In Water Quality Improvement Award

New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Christopher O. Ward announced that DEP has been awarded the 2004 *Outstanding Achievement in Water Quality Improvement Award* by the Water Environment Federation (WEF), a national organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing the global water environment. The WEF presents this award annually to that organization that best demonstrates significant, lasting and measurable excellence in water quality improvement or in prevention of water quality degradation in a region, basin, or water body.

DEP was selected by the Federation's Board of Trustees as the recipient of this year's award. The award was based on DEP's work to revive and rehabilitate the Gowanus Canal , a man-made water body in Brooklyn , New York that had over the years experienced critical pollution problems. DEP's efforts included restoring and reviving the canal through installation of a flushing tunnel that forces water from New York Harbor into the Canal. The achievement has resulted in meeting New York State water quality standards, reducing pollution and allowing for the resurgence of marine life.

Commissioner Ward said, "The Gowanus Canal restoration has been one of the major successes of my tenure at DEP. Our Bureaus of Environmental Engineering and Wastewater Treatment worked diligently to find ways to restore a healthy environment to this long misused area. We very much appreciate the recognition of the WEF."

The Award was presented to DEP on October 5 th at the WEF's annual conference in New Orleans . The WEF is the largest professional organization representing the wastewater treatment industry and its goal is the preservation of the nation's water environment through effective water quality management and promoting professional public training and education programs. Its membership comprises national and international wastewater professionals from the public, private and commercial sectors.