

Wahoo Named Georgia's Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year

Newnan Utilities' Wahoo Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant was recently named Georgia's Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year. The plant, which processes an average of 2.4 million gallons per day, competed in the 1.1 to 10.1 million treated gallons category in the competition held by the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP).

Preparation for the competition was a year-long process, concluding with 22 pages of documentation and a six hour inspection. In comparison, the annual plant inspection conducted by the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) involves a few hours of review of the plant's testing and records and approximately five pages of documentation. To qualify for the competition, a plant must have no non-compliance issues in the previous year. Once qualified, during the visit, inspectors review not only testing and records, but staff certifications and training, the lab, safety regulations and maintenance procedures. During the months of preparation for the competition, Wahoo's staff updated procedure documentation and completed additional safety training, all of which not only helped in the competition, but will be a great asset in the future as well. The inspectors made particular note of Wahoo's maintenance log, stating it was outstanding compared to those they have seen in the past. The plant received bonus points for going above and beyond the call of duty, scoring 110 on a 100 point scale.

Brandon Lovett, Director of Water Operations, noted that preparation for the competition was a team effort. Not only did Wastewater Treatment department employees take part, but other crews and departments assisted as well. It was a company-wide effort, with many departments, including Sewer Operations, Facilities and Grounds, Public Relations, as well as many others being involved during individual aspects of the process.

The award was presented at the spring GAWP meeting in Columbus. Newnan Utilities will represent the state of Georgia in the Region IV Environmental Protection Agency competition, which includes eight southeastern states as well as six tribes. The state award means the plant will serve as a model for others in the industry. Following this year's award, Wahoo will not be eligible to compete next year; however, preparations are already underway to enter our Mineral Springs facility into next year's competition.

"It was a great learning experience. I am extremely proud of our staff, their teamwork and their commitment to Newnan Utilities," said Lovett.