

## Castleton sewer plant wins award for top job

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By *Gordon Dritschilo Herald Staff*

CASTLETON — The town's sewer plant is number one.

Castleton's wastewater treatment facility received a national first place award for small plant operations and excellence from the federal Environmental Protection Agency earlier this month. It was one of four plants recognized in New England.

The award is given each year under the Clean Water Act. Castleton's plant was recognized for its "extremely proactive" maintenance program, "exceptional" septic management program, "excellent" compliance history and "outstanding" effluent quality.

Chief Operator **Ed Tracy** said he has run the plant since 1993 and his assistant **Richard Hodyl** has been there even longer. Each of them was mentioned by name in the notice sent out by the EPA.

"We're pretty innovative when it comes to solving problems," he said. "Usually we're quite handy at retrofitting parts and creating obsolete parts throughout the system."

Castleton's plant uses a sequencing batch reactor system.

"It takes the raw sewage coming in and treats it in batches and discharges it through an ultraviolet disinfecting system," Tracy said. "There are all kinds of systems. They all have advantages. You're seeing more and more SBRs as they become more available."

Tracy said Poultney and West Rutland use systems similar to Castleton's.

"What I like about them is they're able to buffer high flows more effectively by doing it in batches," he said. "I also like the ultraviolet disinfection because we aren't using chemicals."

Tracy said the plant averages about 300,000 gallons of sewage a day, is permitted for 480,000 and has a design capacity of 480,000.

Town Manager Jon Dodd said Castleton has plenty to be proud of in its sewer plant and the people who run it.

"We're a small town in a small state and it's not often we're nationally recognized for something," he said. "It's really cool."