



Front & Centre

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Meet Robert Gonzalez

Bath's [Waste Water Treatment Plant](#) is essentially a large-scale chemistry set, and Robert Gonzalez knows how to keep it running smoothly.

Robert grew up in Miami, Florida and spent twenty years in the Navy as an aircraft mechanic before moving to Bath in 1994.



"I was having trouble finding work in Maine, and this job was an answered prayer," he said. "One day I went to the North End Boat Launch, which is right next to the treatment plant. I asked God to help me find a job, otherwise I was going to have to leave Bath. Shortly afterward I got a job as a maintenance operator at the plant."

The well-timed job opening has turned into a twenty-five-year career for Robert, who quickly moved from maintenance operator to lab operator, and then, most recently, to plant operator.

"I learned a lot as the lab operator. In a nutshell, it's the lab's job to make sure that the plant doesn't have any violations. We have a specific license from the Department of Environmental Protection to release water back into the Kennebec River after it's been through the plant. We're always monitoring to provide high quality wastewater treatment and most of the time, the water we release looks as good as drinking water."

As plant operator and work leader, Robert now oversees four staff members who maintain the plant's facilities, whether that means greasing the machinery, changing valves, inspecting clarifiers, or snow-blowing around hatches in the winter. He has to be ready to respond to alarms and troubleshoot malfunctioning equipment but said that it's less stressful than working in the lab where maintaining a balanced treatment environment required lots of focus and planning.

"Robert is a highly skilled City employee," said Bryan Levitt, Superintendent of the treatment plant. "His knowledge of the process, his reliability and excellent work ethic, his dedication to every task and the high standards he sets for himself are just a few of the things that makes him an outstanding operator and a valuable asset to the City."

"The City entrusted me to work here," said Robert modestly, "and I don't want to let them down."

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