What’s lurking in New York City’s subway?

The Wall Street Journal released an interactive map of the bacteria in New York’s subway system. And as expected, it’s gross enough to make your skin crawl.

The map shows the culmination of a work by researchers at Weill Cornell Medical College, including geneticist Chris Mason (a 2014 Popular Science Brilliant 10 winner). Their study was published February 5 in the journal Cell Systems.

The researcher collected samples from all 466 Metropolitan Transit Authority stations to create the first genetic profile of a city’s transportation system. The project is part of a bigger effort to get a clear picture of life at the microscopic level, and researchers hope to use what they learned to better track down outbreaks, detect bioterrorism attempts, and combat antibiotic resistance.

By the numbers, the team tracked down more than 15,000 types of life forms. From that list, they identified 562 types of bacteria, 67 of which could be dangerous to humans. Luckily, these organisms were found in such small amounts that it wouldn’t be possible for a healthy human to pick up the disease.

New York’s subway system is by no means the cleanest place in the world; the MTA stations are known for their colorful smells, frequent rodent visitors, and discarded paraphernalia.

Read full, original article: Traces of bubonic plague and dysentery found in New York’s subway system