

ELECTRICAL LINEWORKER

Job Description: The demand for electricity in North Dakota has increased dramatically in recent years because of the increased oil and gas activity and the substantial growth in residential, commercial, and industrial construction. Along with that increased demand comes the need for additional infrastructure including electrical transmission and distribution systems. An electric utility lineman installs, maintains, and repairs electrical distribution and transmission systems. This includes conduits, cables, wires, and related equipment such as transformers, circuit breakers, and switches. He or she also digs holes, using augers, and sets poles, using cranes and power equipment. A lineman works outdoors much of the time and has to respond to weather-related problems with transmission and distribution lines, sometimes in the middle of the night and in very challenging weather conditions. A person in this career climbs poles or uses truck-mounted buckets to access equipment. Among many other duties, a lineman opens switches or attaches grounding devices to remove electrical hazards from disturbed or fallen lines or to facilitate repairs. They are among the first to be called to respond to power outages.



Needed Skills and Education: To be a lineman, high levels of skill are needed to observe and diagnose electrical/electronic problems and to repair electrical/electronic objects. A lineman also needs to be able to accomplish the following tasks:

- Follow manufacturing blueprints and diagrams
- Operate earth moving or drilling equipment
- Repair large fixed structures and objects
- Use electrical repair hand and power tools and electronic testing instruments
- Use welding and soldering machines and equipment

Most companies require linemen to have post-secondary schooling and training at vocational – technical schools and community colleges in the areas of Electrical and Power Transmission, Lineworker, and related fields. On-the-job training and formal apprenticeships lasting up to 5 years is often required.

Wages: In North Dakota, the average annual wage for a lineman is \$59,100, with an upper annual wage of \$78,920 for experienced linemen. This compares to the national average annual wage of \$62,280. The beginning hourly wage level is \$15.98, increasing to \$37.94 with experience. The demand outlook for jobs in North Dakota and nationwide is stable.

Other Information: Linemen work in very challenging and sometimes hazardous conditions. They need to be very safety conscious and work with specialized safety clothing and gear.

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