

Telecommunication Workers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Telecommunications Installation and Maintenance Worker

Job Descriptions

Telecommunications Line and Cable Worker, NOC 7245

As a Telecommunications line and cable worker you will perform some or all of the following duties:

- Install, remove, maintain, and repair aerial and underground telephone and other telecommunication transmission and distribution lines, cables, and associated hardware
- Climb poles or use truck-mounted buckets to string wires and perform maintenance
- Work in confined spaces such as trenches, tunnels and crawl spaces
- Install (but do not repair or maintain) cable television lines and cables
- Repair telecommunication cables including single line, coaxial and fibre optic
- Diagnose and repair faulty lines and equipment
- Analyze and record test results
- Co-ordinate the preparation and completion of work assignments

Source: NOC, <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/QuickSearch.aspx?val65=7245>

Telecommunications Installation and Repair Worker, NOC 7246

Working as a Telecommunications Installation and Repair Worker you will perform some or all of the following duties.

Telephone installer and repairers

- Install, arrange, remove, and maintain telephone equipment, wiring, and associated hardware
- Test installed telephone systems to locate transmission faults
- Repair or replace damaged telephones, wire, and associated equipment.

Switch network installers and repairers

- Install electromechanical, analog, and digital trunking systems, circuits, and equipment in telecommunications central offices and switching centres
- Inspect and test trunking systems, circuits, and equipment
- Analyze test results and adjust, change, or repair switching systems, networks, associated equipment, and software.

Telecommunications service testers

- Operate computerized testing systems to conduct service tests on customer lines and equipment
- Determine the nature, cause, and location of service trouble
- Complete test reports and maintain test and service records
- May assist repair personnel to test lines, circuits, and systems, isolate and clear cable faults, and verify records.

Telecommunications equipment technicians

- Install, remove, and maintain various telecommunications equipment
- Configure operating systems and install software for access to the Internet
- Inspect and test operation of telecommunications equipment
- Diagnose and locate equipment faults, repair telecommunications equipment.

Source: NOC, <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/QuickSearch.aspx?val65=7246>

Industry Overview

The telecommunications industry is changing rapidly. The largest growth area is in wireless technology. Competition in this industry is intense, and restructuring and downsizing are common.

Companies will rely more heavily on graduates of colleges and technical institutes who are highly trained in the skills required to do the job. Contract work is common for new graduates. As workers gain experience in this industry they may advance to supervisory positions.

Job Outlook in BC

Telecommunications line and cable workers (NOC 7245)



Chart from Work BC

Telecommunications installation and repair workers (NOC 7246)

0.8% Expected annual demand growth rate (2014-2024)	1,190 Job openings (2014-2024)
Occupation Outlook for B.C.:	
% of job openings from replacement	77%
% of job openings from expansion	23%
Average annual growth rate of employment (2014-2024)	0.8%
Expected cumulative job openings (2014-2024)	1,190

Chart from WorkBC

The **Employment Outlook for BC** provides job openings projections for *Telecommunications Line and Cable Workers* and for *Telecommunications Installation and Repair Workers* within BC regions:

Region	2010 Estimated Employment	2015 Estimated Employment	Avg Annual % Change, 5 Years, 2010 to 2015
Vancouver Island			
▪ Line & Cable	180	220	4.3%
▪ Installation & Repair	380	450	3.8%
Lower Mainland/Southwest			
▪ Line & Cable	670	740	2.2%
▪ Installation & Repair	1,530	1,700	2.2%
Thompson-Okanagan			
▪ Line & Cable	170	170	0.6%
▪ Installation & Repair	320	340	1.0%
Kootenay			
▪ Line & Cable	40	40	0.2%
▪ Installation & Repair	70	70	0.0%
Cariboo			
▪ Line & Cable	30	40	5.2%
▪ Installation & Repair	60	70	6.1%

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North Coast & Nechako			
▪ Line & Cable	10	20	8.8%
▪ Installation & Repair	30	40	7.9%
Northeast			
▪ Line & Cable	10	20	12.4%
▪ Installation & Repair	20	30	14.2%

Source: Regional Employment Projections, BC Stats. Projections for development regions.

<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/LabourIncome/EmploymentUnemployment/RegionalEmploymentProjections.aspx> [accessed October 2014]

You can learn more about working as a Telecommunications worker in BC from:

- **WorkBC Career Profiles**

<http://www.workbc.ca/Careers> [search NOC 7245 and NOC 7246]

Types of Employers

You will look for work with telecommunication carriers and radio and television communications businesses, which are in the information and cultural industries sector because they employ the majority of these workers. The construction industry is the next largest employer, with the remaining jobs spread among various industries and services.

Salary

In BC, the average annual salary for Telecommunication Installation and Maintenance workers, NOC 7245, is between \$66,000 and \$95,000 and Telecommunications Installation and Repair workers, NOC 7246, is between \$53,000 and \$66,000.

Hourly wages for journey person (fully-qualified) **telephone line installers /repairers** generally range from about \$16 to \$30. Some experienced workers earn more than \$30 an hour. Apprentices earn about half the journey person rate in their first year. Wages increase slowly during training until they are fully qualified.

Many permanent full time telecommunication workers belong to a labour union. If this is true for you, then your wages and benefits are negotiated by union representatives on your behalf. In addition to a salary, you may also receive benefits such as health and dental coverage, paid vacation and sick days, and contributions to retirement income plans.

Source: Work BC

And

Career Cruising database (Profile for Telephone Line Installer/Repairer).

Available from the VPL Digital Library

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

Job Bank Canada, Wage Reports, provides hourly wages for in BC regions:

Telecommunications Line and Cable Workers (NOC 7245)

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	18.00	24.49	32.00
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	18.00	23.75	30.08

Source: Job Bank Canada, Wage Reports, <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

Telecommunications Installation & Repair Workers (NOC 7246)

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	15.00	30.00	35.00
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	17.00	29.00	34.30
Thompson--Okanagan Region	15.00	30.00	35.00
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	15.00	30.00	35.00

Source: Job Bank Canada, Wage Reports, <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

Working Hours

As a telecommunication worker, either as a Line and Cable Worker or an Installation and Repair Worker, you will usually work a regular 40 hours per week with some evenings and weekends included. Also, you may be on call 24 hours a day or be called out to deal with emergencies.

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- Interested in keeping current in technology
- Able to read and use diagrams/drawing
- Detail-oriented
- Physical strength and comfort with heights
- Preferably a driver's licence
- Customer service skills

Education and Experience

Telecommunications Line and Cable Workers NOC 7245

- Completion of secondary school is required.
- Completion of a four-year telecommunications line and cable apprenticeship program or a combination of over three years work experience in the trade and some industry- related or other specialized courses or
- Completion of a two-year college program in electronics is usually required.

Telecommunications Installation and Repair Workers NOC 7246

- Completion of secondary school is required.
- Telephone and switch network installers and repairers require completion of an apprenticeship program ranging from three to four years or a combination of over three years work experience in the trade and some high school, college, or industry related courses.
- Telecommunications equipment technicians usually require completion of a college electrical and electronics program and several months of on-the-job training or completion of a three- or four-year apprenticeship program.

Qualifications

Licensing Requirements for Telecommunications Technologists & Technicians

In BC, professional designations are granted by The Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of British Columbia (ASTTBC)

- **ASTTBC Designation** requirements see <http://www.asttbc.com/>

To become certified as an Applied Science Technologist (AScT) or Certified Technician (CTech), telecommunications technologists and technicians must:

- Apply for membership with ASTTBC.
- Have, in addition to academic requirements, a minimum of two years of appropriate level work experience, **one of which must be Canadian experience** at the level of certification being sought (technician or technologist).
 - work experience must be verified by technical references who have knowledge of the applicant's technical ability.
- Pass the Association's Ethics and Professional Practice Examinations.

Source: ASTTBC guidelines for registration & membership:
http://www.asttbc.com/registration/technologists/how_to_apply.php

Internationally Trained Telecommunication Professionals

Telecommunication Professionals who meet all the current academic criteria and experience requirements but lack Canadian work experience may apply for a "Provisional Membership" with ASTTBC.

- **ASTTBC "Provisional Membership"**
(AScT [Provisional] and CTech [Provisional])
<http://www.asttbc.org/registration/itp/>

Source: Guidelines "Provisional Membership" for internationally trained professionals.
<http://www.asttbc.com/registration/itp/>

3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, electronic sources, and through professional associations.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the Vancouver Sun & The Province at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the Vancouver Sun on Wednesdays and Saturdays and in The Province on Sundays.

Job White Pages

Available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/jobfreewaycom>

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library
Access at VPL locations only

Online Job Postings

- **Indeed.com**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards
- **Skilled Workers.com**
http://www.skilledworkers.com/search_job/search.php
- **TechJobs.ca**
<http://www.technicaljobs.ca/en>
- **T-Net British Columbia**
http://www.bctechnology.com/frameset_emp.html

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC (ASTTBC)**
http://www.asttbc.com/services/employers/emp_reg.php
BC employers who post jobs requiring ASTTBC certification
http://www.asttbc.com/careers/awareness/ethnic_assoc.php
Programs with immigrant and settlement societies in BC
- **ASSTTBC TechJobs**
<http://www.asttbc.org/services/jobpostings.php>
- **Canadian Technical Employment Network (CTEN)**
<http://www.cten.ca/>
Online job network for technicians and technology professionals. You must be a member of a provincial technologists & technicians society (e.g. Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC, ASTTBC) to access the job postings

Identifying the Right Position

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a wide range of different job titles that are relevant.

For **Telecommunications Line and Cable Workers** (NOC 7245), look for these and other related job titles

- Apprentice Lineman/woman – Telecommunications
- Cable Repairer, Telecommunications
- Communication Technician – Construction
- Construction Technician – Cable Television
- Lineman/woman, Telecommunications
- Splicer Technician – Telephone
- Telecommunications Line Installer

For **Telecommunications Installation and Repair Workers** (NOC 7246), look for these and other related job titles

- Apprentice Communication Electrician – Switching
- Cellular Telephone Technician
- Communication Technician, Telephone
- Exchange Tester – Telecommunications
- Line and Station Installer, Telephone
- Mobile Radio Installer
- Private Branch Exchange (PBX) Installer
- Switch Network Installer and Repairer
- Telecommunications Equipment Technician

Creating a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of companies in the Lower Mainland or BC. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Pacific Northwest High Technology Directory**

See BC section, especially "Industry" & "Products Categories", e.g.
Communications Equipment/Services
Available at the Central Library, 380 EL3ad

- **Reference Canada**

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "telecommunication" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

NOTE: *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

4. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume (curriculum vitae) and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following pathfinders which are available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

- **Networking for Employment**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Networking for Employment]

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

Industry Associations

Associations for telecommunication workers in BC and Canada provide assistance to individuals. Registration and fees are usually required for membership.

- **Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC (ASTTBC)**
<http://www.asttbc.com/>
- **Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (CCTT)**
<http://www.cctt.ca/>
- **Society of Punjabi Engineers and Technologists of British Columbia**
<http://www.speatbc.org/>

Industry Journals

Search the Vancouver Public Library catalogue for journals related to your profession. Examples at the Central Library:

- **Network World** / Laurentian Technomedia
Available in print at VPL, Central Library 338.47 N47 CM and online at:
<http://www.networkworld.com/>

**Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Branch,
Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.**

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>