

Gasfitters & Pipefitters

An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Gasfitters (NOC 7253) & Pipefitters (NOC 7252)

Gasfitters may also be called:

- gas servicer
- gas technician

Pipefitters may also be called:

- steamfitters
- marine pipefitter

1. What Would I Do?

Gasfitters install, inspect, repair and maintain gas meters, regulators, gas lines and gas appliances and heating units. **Pipefitters** design, assemble, install, maintain, troubleshoot and repair pipes carrying water, chemicals and fuel in heating, cooling, lubricating and other process piping systems. **Steamfitters are** pipefitters who specialize in high-pressure liquid or gas piping; you install, repair, and replace heavy pipes that can withstand higher pressure, and carry substances such as steam.

Some main tasks for all fitters (**Gasfitter / Pipefitter / Steamfitter**):

- Read and interpret blueprints to determine the type and size of pipe to use
- Measure, cut, and assemble the pipes

- weld, braze, cement, solder and thread joints to join pipes and fabricate sections of piping system
- Install and secure the pipes, supports, valves and control systems; test for leaks and other problems

Gasfitters also:

- install and maintain gas meters and regulators and gas lines between gas unit and gas meter
- install, maintain and service gas heating units and their components, such as burners, valves and automatic controls
- repair and service gas appliances
- attend to gas escape calls and help with the investigation of gas fires and explosions

More information:

WorkBC Career Profiles

- **Pipefitters, steamfitters** <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7252>
- **Gasfitters** <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7253>

Career Cruising

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/> [profiles for Steamfitter & Pipefitter]

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

As a pipefitter/steamfitter/gasfitter, you are physically fit, comfortable with heights, able to read blueprints, and have good hand-eye coordination and good stamina.

Gasfitters may work indoors or outdoors. You will often work independently, but will interact with customers on most maintenance and repair jobs.

Pipefitters/Steamfitters may work both indoors and outdoors. Outdoor work environments may be noisy and dirty, and you may be exposed to unfavourable weather conditions. Some workers may be required to travel or temporarily relocate to remote locations while working on particular projects.

Gasfitters, pipefitters and steamfitters are often required to work at heights from scaffolds and ladders. You may also be required to carry heavy items, such as pipes, during their workday. Work may also be conducted in cramped and awkward spaces.

Sources:

- *Career Cruising* database (Profiles for Pipefitter & Steamfitter)
- WorkBC Career Profiles
- Careers in Construction, Profiles: Gasfitter and Steamfitter/pipefitter
<http://www.careersinconstruction.ca/en/career/gasfitter>
<http://www.careersinconstruction.ca/en/career/steamfitterpipefittersprinkler-system-installer>

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the median annual salary for *pipefitters and steamfitters* is \$62,568. The median annual salary for *gasfitters* is \$45,813.

Annual income varies depending on the number of hours you work in a year. The amount of work available is largely determined by the economic situation of the area. In addition to salary, full-time employees may also receive benefits such as paid vacations, medical and dental benefits, and pension plan contributions.

In BC's regions, *Pipefitters and Steamfitters* can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
Canada	20.00	36.00	47.25
British Columbia	18.00	28.00	42.00
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	19.00	26.48	35.00
Thompson--Okanagan Region	18.00	28.00	42.00
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	18.00	28.00	42.00

Source: Job Bank Wage Report http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage [Search 7252]

Gasfitters can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
Canada	20.00	30.00	44.00
British Columbia	12.65	30.42	52.63
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	12.65	30.32	51.22

Source: Job Bank Wage Report http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage [Search 7253]

Sources: WorkBC Career Profiles & Career Cruising

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

The demand for workers in B.C. is driven largely by the construction industry. About one-half of new openings will result from new job growth. This industry has experienced rapid growth in its commercial, industrial and residential sectors, creating a demand for skilled workers.

In northern B.C., many steamfitters, pipefitters and gasfitters work in resource-based industries, such as forestry and mining, oil and gas. Some of these resource industries have experienced strong economic growth.

Employment Outlook for Gas Fitters

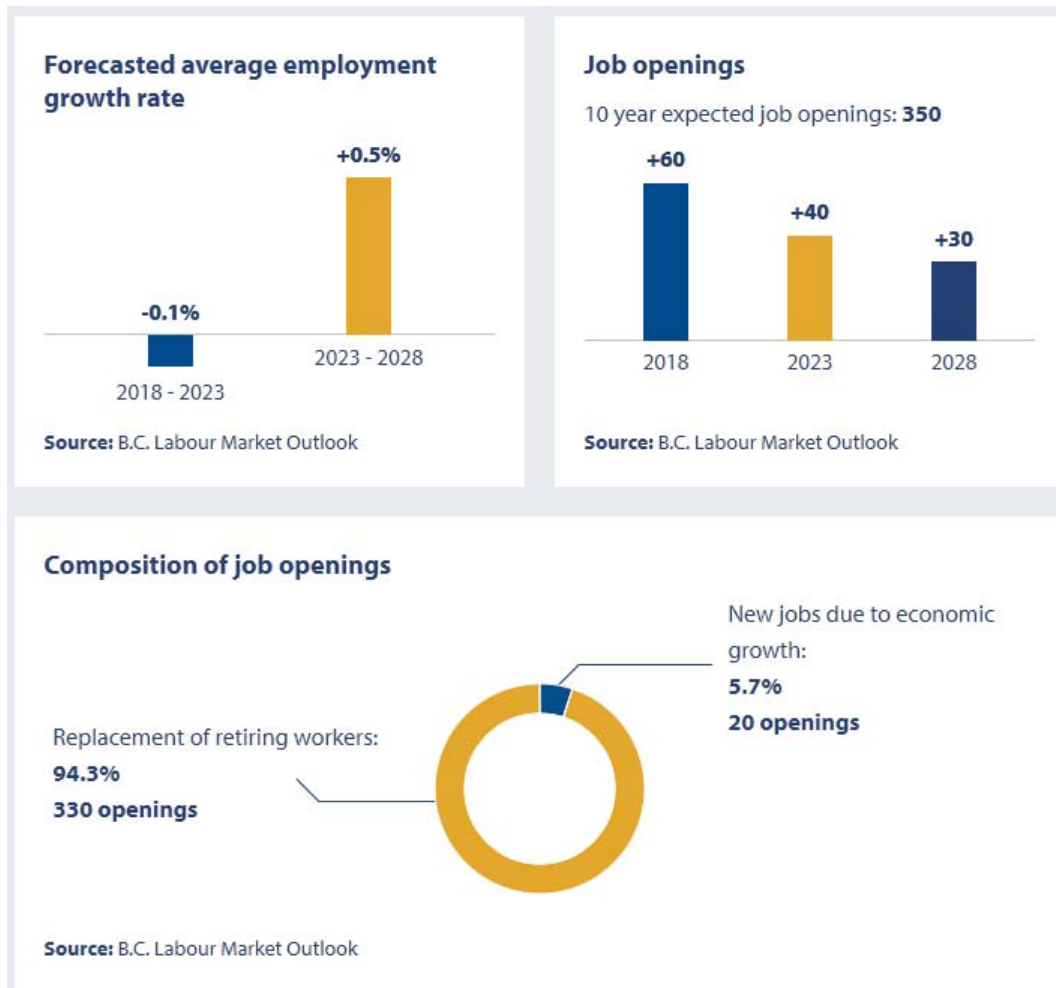


Chart from WorkBC (NOC 7253)

Employment Outlook for Pipefitters

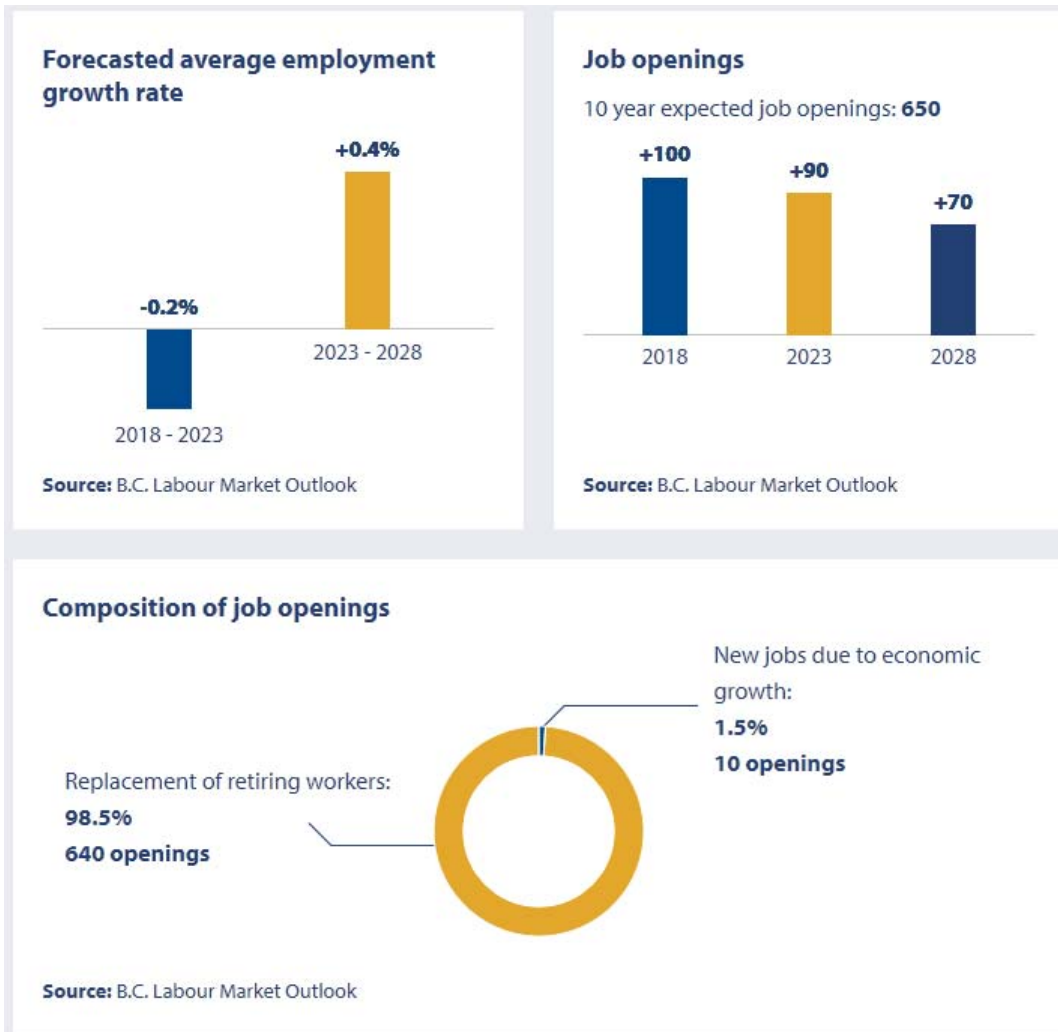


Chart from WorkBC (NOC 7252)

Source:

- WorkBC Career Profiles

5. How Do I Become A Steamfitter, Pipefitter or Gasfitter?

Steamfitters and **pipefitters** usually require graduation from secondary school. In addition, completion of a four-year apprenticeship** program is required to be eligible for trade certification. *Trade certification is not required to work as a steamfitter or pipefitter in B.C.*, but workers with certification will likely have more employment opportunities.

**apprenticeship program OR four years of work experience and some college/industry courses in steamfitting/pipefitting

Gasfitters require Grade 10 or equivalent; secondary school graduation is preferred. In addition, all gas fitters must hold a Class A or Class B gas fitter certificate issued by the Technical Safety BC (<https://www.technicalsaftybc.ca/>)

- **Class A:** installation and alteration of any gas system, no loads or limits
- **Class B:** installation and alteration of any gas system **with limits**

The Industry Training Authority (www.itabc.ca) offers a two-year apprenticeship program for domestic and commercial gas fitters. Completion of the apprenticeship will result in a British Columbia Certificate of Apprenticeship and a Class B gas fitter licence.

Gasfitters and Pipefitters are Inter-provincially recognized Red Seal trades. With a Red Seal, you can work in this trade anywhere in Canada.

Sources:

<http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7252#section-job-requirements>

<http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7253#section-job-requirements>

<http://www.itabc.ca/program/steamfitter-pipefitter>

<https://www.itabc.ca/program/gasfitter-class>

<https://www.itabc.ca/program/gasfitter-class-b>

<https://www.technicalsaftybc.ca/gas-licences>

<https://www.technicalsaftybc.ca/certification/gas/gas-certification>

<http://www.red-seal.ca/w.2lc.4m.2@-eng.jsp>

6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where would I work?

Steamfitters and pipefitters work in:

- *the maintenance departments of factories, plants and similar establishments or by pipefitting contractors*

Gasfitters work in:

- *gas utility companies and gas servicing companies*

Finding Advertised Jobs

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun & The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings and careers section and also the online version at: <https://www.workopolis.com/en>

Online Job Postings

- **Mechanical Contractors Association of BC (MCABC)**
<http://www.mcabc.org/> [click on 'Careers - Job Postings']
- **WorkBC Jobs**
<http://www.workbc.ca/JobSeekers/SearchResults.aspx>
- **Indeed.com**
<http://ca.indeed.com/>
- **Job Bank**
http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/job_search.do

Finding “Hidden Jobs”

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below help you with finding jobs in this “hidden” job market.

Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers

You can use company directories to produce lists of employers who employ steamfitters, pipefitters and gasfitters in Vancouver, the Lower Mainland or throughout BC. Contact them directly to find out if they’re hiring.

- **BC Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association Members List**
<http://www.roadbuilders.bc.ca/members.php>
- **Mechanical Contractors Association of BC (MCABC) Directory**
<https://www.mcabc.org/list-of-mcabc-members/>
- **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 “*gas fitters*” or “*steam fitters*” and click LOOKUP. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the “View Results” button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

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).*

Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

Networking and the Hidden Job Market:

When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.

Volunteer opportunities

- **Volunteer BC**

<http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

- **Habitat for Humanity**

Volunteer at Habitat ReStores or Habitat Construction Sites

<https://www.habitatgv.ca/applytovolunteer/>

For additional tips see:

- **Networking for Employment**

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

[Search Networking for Employment]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**

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

[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

7. Applying for a Job

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

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

For more information see:

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

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

[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

With experience, **steamfitters and pipefitters** can advance to supervisory positions or establish their own businesses.

With experience and additional training, **gas fitters** can move into supervisory positions, including foreman, maintenance manager or service manager. Some may decide to be self-employed and start their own contracting businesses.

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **STEP**

<http://www.stepbc.ca/>

STEP is a free employment program can help you find work in the construction industry

- **Careers in Construction**

<http://www.careersinconstruction.ca/en/careers/career-finder>

- **Careers in Oil & Gas**

<http://www.careersinoilandgas.com/>

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

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

[Search Learn More about Working in BC and Canada]

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central 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/>.