

Powerline Technician

Build and repair the high-voltage lines that carry electricity across Canada. Well paid, dangerous, outdoors in every storm.

TYPICAL PAY

\$95,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$65k to \$130k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Utility yards, roadsides, bucket trucks, remote line corridors

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Grade 12 math and physics. A driver's licence is a must, and most employers want a DZ (truck with air brakes) licence before you start.
- 2 College program (recommended)** 1 to 2 years
A college certificate or diploma such as Conestoga College's two-year Powerline Technician diploma in Ontario. You learn to climb poles and work aloft before anyone hires you. Utilities recruit from these programs.
- 3 Get hired and registered** Months to a year of applying
Hydro One, local utilities and line contractors hire apprentices in intakes. Register with Skilled Trades Ontario or your provincial trades authority.
- 4 Work and study** 4 years
About 8,000 hours in Ontario (7,680 on the job plus 320 in class). Climb, rig, splice and string line under a journeyman. In-school blocks cover electrical theory, line design and live-line work.
- 5 Certificate of Qualification and Red Seal** After your hours
Pass the provincial exam and the interprovincial Red Seal exam.

Pros and cons

- + Among the highest-paid trades, with a pension at utilities
- + Real purpose: you are the one who turns the lights back on
- + Outdoors, physical, never at a desk
- One of the most dangerous jobs in Canada: high voltage and heights
- Storm call-outs on holidays, at night, in ice and minus 30
- Very hard on the body; injuries and long-term wear are common

Optional boosts

Live-line and bare-hand certification. Transmission line work. Underground cable splicing. Crew leader and supervisor.

Good to know

The 1998 ice storm

Freezing rain in Quebec and eastern Ontario crushed about 1,000 steel transmission towers and about 35,000 wooden poles. Line crews from across Canada and the US worked for weeks in the cold t...

Crews travel for hurricanes

Canadian utilities send crews to help after big storms. Hydro One and other utilities sent crews to Atlantic Canada after Hurricane Fiona in 2022, which knocked out power to about 80% of Nova Scotia custo...

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Electrical power line and cable workers, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Red Seal Program: Powerline Technician

Skilled Trades Ontario: Powerline Technician (434A)

alis Alberta: Powerline Technician occupation profile

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/powerline-technician>



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