Career Pathway Spotlight:
Discover a Career as a Power Plant Operator

Discover your career path in the energy industry. Learn where your interests will take you. Explore the meaningful work in which you can immerse yourself. Set your sites on what you can learn and the increasing responsibilities that can be yours. See how you will be challenged and what will you accomplish.

START HERE

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED

BENEFICIAL CREDENTIALS
• National Career Readiness Certificate
• Energy Industry Fundamentals Certificate

HELPER

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LEARN MORE/EARN MORE
Educational Opportunities for Advancement

AVERAGE EARNING POTENTIAL:
$34,700–$148,500 PER YEAR*

2 YEARS*
ASSISTANT OPERATOR
• Apprenticeship
• Experience in the position

3–6 YEARS*
OPERATOR
• Associate’s Degree
• On-the-job training

6–8 YEARS*
OPERATIONS SPECIALIST
• On-the-job training
• Experience in the position

8+ YEARS*
OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR
• Bachelor’s Degree or
• On-the-job training

*Compensation averages should be used as a guide. There are numerous factors that impact actual compensation. These estimates do not include over-time, which can be a sizeable addition to base pay. Years of service and training recommendations should also be used as a guide. Company requirements vary.

Note: Some energy companies may require pre-employment testing. Please check the job requirements. These may include the EEI Pre-Employment Test or a Physical Abilities Test.
Become a Power Plant Operator

STARTING OFF AS AN ENTRY-LEVEL HELPER:

What will you do?
- Provide assistance to plant operators by reading gauges and checking equipment
- Make work area safe

What knowledge/skills/abilities will you need?
- Work in a team environment
- Able to lift 75 lbs.
- Listen and follow directions
- Be comfortable with heights
- Be able to work in noisy conditions
- Understand applied math, including algebra, trig and geometry
- Be on time and prepared for work

ASSISTANT OPERATOR:

What will you do?
- Maintain and operate auxiliary equipment
- Check gauges and levels
- Apply Alternating Current/Direct Current concepts to daily work
- Check valves, pumps, engines/turbines
- Understand plant processes and systems (water, electric, etc.)

What knowledge/skills/abilities will you need?
- Physical ability to climb stairs and ladders, operate stiff valves manually, lift weights, control pneumatic or hydraulic wrenches
- Apply knowledge obtained during training in the work environment

OPERATOR:

What will you do?
- Ensure generating equipment runs when needed
- Prepare reports of unusual incidents or problems

What knowledge/skills/abilities will you need?
- Use information to diagnose and solve problems
- Ability to manage multiple tasks at one time
- Understand and apply basic mechanical principles (e.g. gear trains, centrifugal force, heat flow)
- Comprehend entire systems and how they function
- Foresee system applications of malfunctions or of own actions
- Anticipate required future conditions in numerous interacting systems

OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR:

What will you do?
- Determine schedules and work activities of team members
- Review team member performance and provide feedback
- Inspect records and log book entries to determine plant efficiency
- Prepare and manage budgets
- Communicate and report to management
- Deal with potentially stressful situations

What knowledge/skills/abilities will you need?
- Manage and lead people
- Effectively communicate with people
- Understand financial management principles
- Proficient in computer skills for report preparation
- Ability to assign priority or sequence to the steps for completing a job
- Understand and adapt work procedures or priorities in response to changing or unforeseen requirements or conditions

ENERGY INDUSTRY CAREERS OFFER:
- Excellent salaries
- Opportunities for advancement
- Job growth & stability
- Professional development and training
- Great benefits

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