

Mechanics Career Guide

A guide for first-line supervisors of mechanics, installers, and repairers; bus and truck mechanics and diesel engine specialists; heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers; industrial machinery mechanics.



Finding Your Way to a Career: Mechanics

The construction industry relies on heavy equipment, powerful machinery, pipelines, and other large machines. Mechanics play a vital role in making sure equipment runs properly. Mechanics work to diagnose, adjust, repair, or maintain the machinery that is specific to their role. They are highly skilled with their hands and have great problem-solving skills.

How to use this document to learn more.

As one of the Top 100 Hot Jobs for 2022, mechanic is a promising occupation for job seekers in West Michigan. To find out if this might be a good career choice for you, use this Career Map to examine:

- Who might enjoy this kind of work.
- Qualifications needed in this career field.
- Growth potential and levels of pay.
- Valuable skills for this type of work.
- Common tools and technology used in this work.
- Occupations, responsibilities, and other job titles.

This information is drawn from national data and insights from West Michigan employers. It is meant as a starting point for job seekers and career coaches to work together in the exploration of meaningful and fulfilling careers.



Exploring Occupations as a Mechanic

Construction mechanics work to support the operations of construction projects by maintaining the heavy machinery either on site or off site for a specific job. Tasks for a mechanic in the construction industry may include inspecting trucks, cranes, bulldozers, and other heavy equipment. Mechanics might diagnose faults using computerized equipment and will perform major repair work when necessary.

The Path to Success

Who might enjoy this type of work?

People who work in the mechanics field tend to enjoy:

- Practical, hands-on problem solving.
- Working with real world materials like wood, tools, and machinery.
- Following set procedures and routines.
- Working with data and details more than with ideas.
- Having a clear line of authority to follow.
- Working with projects, starting and carrying out tasks that provide solutions.
- Being the decision maker while leading a group of people.

People who do well in this work generally perform well in such areas as:

- Responsibility
- Ingenuity
- Adaptability
- Achievement
- Decisiveness

Qualifications needed in this career field.

Nationally, most people working as a mechanic have some college education but no degree. The next largest group has earned an associate degree or apprenticeship certificate. Sample certifications include:

First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers sample credentials: HVAC certification, EPA Universal certification.

Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists sample credentials: Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification, commercial driver's license (CDL), ASE medium-heavy truck certification.

Heating, Air conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers sample credentials: EPA 608 technician certification, HVAC certification, CFC refrigeration certification.

Industrial Machinery Mechanics sample credentials: industrial maintenance mechanic certificate, associate degree in science.

Growth potential and levels of pay.

In the West Michigan counties of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa, there were 10,020 mechanics jobs in 2020. That number is projected to grow by at least 8% to 10,593 by 2025.

Valuable skills for this type of work.

Tasks and functions performed by mechanics include:

- Repairing and maintaining mechanical equipment.
- Inspecting equipment, structure, or material.
- Communicating with supervisors, peers or subordinates.
- Getting information.
- Making decisions and solving problems.

Common tools and technology used in this work.

Tools: circuit testers, blow torches, power saws, air compressors

Technology: computer-aided design software, analytical software, inventory management software

Mapping a Career: Mechanics Installation and Repair

First-line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers and Repairers
\$28.63 - \$44.21

Electrical Power Line Installers & Repairers
\$31.11 - \$47.11

Heating, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration Mechanics & Installers
\$20.35 - \$32.75

Industry Machinery Mechanics
\$19.73 - \$29.10

Bus/Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists
\$19.47 - \$27.81

Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers
\$17.60 - \$26.82

Maintenance & Repair Workers, General
\$14.08 - \$24.10

Wage ranges represent 25th - 75th percentile.
Timeframes represent the typical education and experience combined.
See page 6 for detailed description of occupations.

LESS THAN 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

5-9 YEARS

10+ YEARS

Mechanics: A Field Guide

Occupations, responsibilities and other job titles.

First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers

Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of mechanics, installers, and repairers. May also advise customers on recommended services. Excludes team or work leaders.

Examples of locally used job titles: electrical foreman, facility maintenance supervisor, maintenance foreman, maintenance manager, maintenance planner, maintenance supervisor, production crew supervisor.

Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists

Diagnose, adjust, repair, or overhaul buses and trucks, or maintain and repair any type of diesel engine. Includes mechanics working primarily with automobile or marine diesel engines.

Examples of locally used job titles: bus mechanic, diesel mechanic, diesel technician, fleet mechanic, general repair mechanic, mechanic, service technician, trailer mechanic, transit mechanic, truck mechanic.

Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers

Install or repair heating, central air conditioning, HVAC, or refrigeration systems, including oil burners, hot-air furnaces, and heating stoves.

Examples of locally used job titles: A/C tech (air conditioning technician), HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) installer, HVAC mechanic, HVAC specialist, refrigeration mechanic, refrigeration operator, refrigeration technician, service technician, systems mechanic, transportation refrigeration technician.

Industrial Machinery Mechanics

Repair, install, adjust, or maintain industrial production and processing machinery or refinery and pipeline distribution systems. May also install, dismantle, or move machinery and heavy equipment according to plans.

Examples of locally used job titles: fixer, industrial machinery mechanic, industrial mechanic, loom fixer, machine adjuster, maintenance mechanic, maintenance technician, master mechanic, mechanic, overhauler.



West Michigan Works! is part of the statewide Michigan Works! system and the workforce development agency in West Michigan. We serve the employers and job seekers of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa counties.

We partner with employers, educators, economic developers and community organizations to create a qualified workforce that meets our region's current and future talent needs and fuels our shared economic future.

Learn more at: <https://www.westmiworks.org/>



CareerPoint helps students and job seekers find their place in the world of work by matching interests and abilities with training, support, and meaningful and rewarding careers.

By providing training and tools, CareerPoint supports the workforce professionals who help people navigate the West Michigan job market.

CareerPoint promotes evidence-based coaching to help students and job seekers discover and follow pathways to rewarding careers. This model follows seven steps to each participant's success.

Learn more at: <https://talnetcareerpoint.org/>