

Get blown away by a career in Wind Farming

Wind farm operators have a very diverse job. Between understanding the wind farming process, ensuring staff and community safety, and maintaining the wind turbines – no two days are ever the same.

Did you know that wind is a form of solar energy? Winds are caused by the uneven heating of the atmosphere by the sun, the irregularities of the earth's surface, and rotation of the earth. Wind flow patterns are modified by the earth's terrain, bodies of water, and vegetation. In the search for greener, renewable energy sources, humans have figured out how to capture the wind.

A wind farm can be as small as one turbine... or as big as 421 wind turbines generating a total capacity of 735 megawatts. Big or small- wind turbines work by capturing the wind. The nacelle, the head of the wind turbine, can be built with the intelligence to turn itself into the wind. The wind turns the blades, and as they spin they generate current and voltage. The current and voltage travel down the tower to a substation. The substation cleans up the power and then supplies it to the grid. From there it goes out to power homes, schools and businesses.

A career as a wind farm operator includes exhilarating challenges (a climb to the top of a turbine can be 78 meters), the opportunity of world travel (wind farms are located around the world), and a chance to work with your hands and prove your ability to diagnose, troubleshoot, and resolve mechanical and electrical issues.

To become a wind farm operator you need a high school diploma with Math, English and a minimum of 10 high school science credits. Additionally, you will need working knowledge of computers, specifically including word processing, spreadsheets, data bases, Internet, and e-mail.

The Lethbridge College has an International Wind Energy Academy. This intensive program is a combination of technical training, theory and **hands-on lab practice** on training turbines. Upon completion of this program, you'll receive a Lethbridge College Certificate and be able to write the BZEE examinations. Those who score the required marks will obtain a temporary BZEE Certificate of Competence. The **BZEE certification** will provide you with employment opportunities throughout the world.

Other careers related to wind farm operation are: machinist, mechanic, or wind farm crane operator.

***This information has not been verified by Science Alberta Foundation, and is for general informative purposes only.*



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