Manitoba Hydro Projects Success Guide

Women in Construction Trades



Manitoba Hydro understands the value of having women working in the trades – but recognizes there are challenges working in a male-dominated industry. This document specifically addresses the challenges women can face in the construction trades.

Women are still under-represented in the construction trades and may face barriers on the job. But with respectful workplace policies in place, a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and discrimination, an increase in large projects and developments near Indigenous communities, and the right "tools" to address these challenges, more women are discovering that working in the trades can lead to a rewarding career.

If you're considering a career in the construction trades but are concerned about working in a male-dominated industry, here is some information that can help you choose the right path for you and find support every step of the way.

Choosing a construction trade.

- Ask people you know in the construction trades about their experiences.
- Reach out to other women in the construction trades through family, friends, social media, or through organizations like Manitoba Hydro.
- Search for programs that support or fund women in the construction trades.
- Research careers, organizations and opportunities that interest you.

Finding opportunities.

- Contact an employment coordinator in your community.
- Join Manitoba Hydro Project's job seeker database. Specifically for people from Manitoba's Indigenous communities, the database connects Manitoba Hydro project candidates with contractors working at generating stations, on transmission lines, and other construction-related projects.

Choosing the right job.

- Ask questions at the job interview: Are there women on the crew? What does the company do to ensure women feel comfortable on the job site? How do they deal with discrimination and harassment issues? What accommodations are available for workers with families?
- If you have family commitments and responsibilities, consider the support available to you. Will the employer make accommodations for you? Do you have family members who can share the responsibility? Are there childcare or daycare options in the area?



Getting support on the job.

Everyone on and around a job site is responsible for creating a safe and respectful workplace. That includes Manitoba Hydro, the contractor who hired you, the unions that represent you, and most importantly the people on the ground, doing the work.

- Use the buddy system. Manitoba Hydro projects encourage women to pair up on a job site to provide support, guidance and assistance to one another.
- Consult with your supervisor. Your direct supervisor or the contractor should be your first point of contact for any questions or concerns about health and safety. They may have supports in place as part of your contract.
- Talk to your union representative or shop steward. If you are a union member, they can offer support and help you access the resources you need.
- Speak to a Manitoba Hydro project liaison officer if you need further assistance. They can provide additional guidance and resources.

Sexual harassment is a serious issue that is not acceptable or tolerated on Manitoba Hydro projects. We encourage you to report any instances of sexual harassment directly to your employer.

Success Stories: Sandy and Joelle

More Indigenous women are finding success in the construction trades and changing the gender bias for the next generation of skilled workers.

Sandy Murdock, Fisher River Cree Nation

Sandy Murdock from Fisher River Cree Nation is an electrician apprentice on the path to getting her Journeyperson certificate. She worked at the Manitoba Hydro Wash'ake Mayzoon Generating Station from December 2023 to August 2024.



The opportunity:

Indigenous Women's On-The-Job (OJT) training opportunity with Birdtail Sioux Forbes Bros. Joint Venture at the Manitoba Hydro Wash'ake Mayzoon Generating Station

The job:

Level 3 Electrician Apprentice

"Everyone was really friendly and got along well. Every day I looked forward to going to work and I'm proud of how far I've come in my career and what my colleagues and I accomplished at Wash'ake Mayzoon Station."

Joelle McAuley, Sagkeeng Anicinabe Nation

Joelle McAuley from Sagkeeng Anicinabe Nation worked as a safety administrator at the Manitoba Hydro Pointe du Bois Generating Station.



The opportunity:

Indigenous Women's On-The-Job (OJT) training opportunity with Pennecon at the Manitoba Hydro Pointe du Bois Generating Station

The job:

Safety Administrator at the Manitoba Hydro Pointe du Bois Generating Station

"The role is amazing, and I have great teachers. What I most enjoy about the role is meeting new people and being part of a team that is fully accepting of me as a co-worker."

Manitoba Hydro believes that diversity helps to create a welcoming, inclusive environment and a richer understanding of different ideas, cultures and perspectives. We are committed to building a diverse workforce and encourage racialized people, women, Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+, and anyone from underrepresented groups to apply for a job in the construction trades.