# Building B.C.'s clean buildings workforce



British Columbia's buildings sector is one of the province's largest sources of employment and plays an important role in addressing affordability while reducing emissions through energy-efficient construction and building retrofits. As building standards like B.C.'s Energy Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code evolve and building heating, cooling and hot water systems electrify, demand for skilled workers will continue to grow.

- Building construction employed 226,700 people in 2024, with an additional 53,700 working in architecture, engineering and related services.
- Buildings account for 14% of B.C.'s greenhouse gas emissions, making energy efficiency and electrification key climate solutions.
- B.C. has committed to making all new homes net-zero energy ready by 2032.



The clean buildings sector encompasses both new construction and building retrofits.

### What kinds of jobs are part of B.C.'s clean buildings sector?

- Mechanical engineers and architects
- Tradespeople: electricians, carpenters, refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics
- Emerging roles: building envelope specialists, energy advisors, building automation and control technicians, specialized project managers

## Growth opportunity

Meeting B.C.'s housing and climate goals will require a workforce with the skills to build and retrofit the buildings of the future.

- Construction is expected to generate 8% of job openings in B.C. by 2035.
- In a net-zero scenario, B.C.'s clean buildings sector could grow to 78,100 workers by 2050.
- Higher building performance standards and supportive retrofit programs will increase demand for workers with expertise in energy efficiency, building electrification and resilience.



## Workforce challenge

B.C. will need more skilled workers equipped with the knowledge and skills to keep pace with demand for new construction and retrofits.

- Labour shortages are already affecting key occupations, including electricians and carpenters.
- Workers will need ongoing opportunities to build new skills as technologies, materials and building standards evolve.
- Recruitment and retention challenges, including barriers facing women and other underrepresented groups, continue to limit workforce growth.

## What will unlock growth?

### Expand skills development

Governments, employers, industry and training providers should expand training, apprenticeships and upskilling in energy efficiency, retrofits and building electrification, while supporting continuous learning.

### Strengthen local workforce capacity

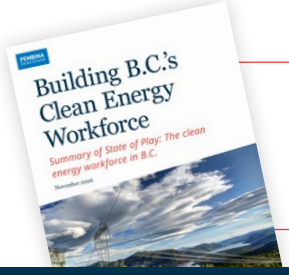
Governments should provide targeted funding to employers, industry and training providers to improve access to training in rural and remote communities.

### Improve recruitment and retention

Employers, industry and governments should address barriers to entering and remaining in construction careers and improve job quality across the sector.

## Why does this matter for B.C.?

B.C.'s construction workforce is already building the homes and infrastructure the province needs. With a strong workforce strategy that includes planning, skills development and training, workers, businesses and communities across B.C. can benefit from growing demand for energy-efficient, resilient buildings.




Read Summary of *State of Play: The clean energy workforce in B.C.* for economy-wide workforce recommendations: pembina.org/pub/state-of-play-clean-energy-workforce-bc