Building B.C.'s critical minerals workforce



British Columbia's mining sector has an opportunity to supply the minerals needed for batteries, electricity infrastructure and other clean technologies. As global demand for these products grows, the province is well positioned to expand mining, processing and manufacturing.

- Mining, mineral processing, metal manufacturing, and support activities employed 49,400 people in B.C. in 2024.
- Critical minerals projects are a priority for both the provincial and federal governments, with eight mines and one refinery expansion identified for fast-tracking.
- Mining jobs offer competitive wages, with median weekly earnings of around $2,140 compared with $1,210 across all industries.



The critical minerals sector includes mining, processing and metal manufacturing.

What kinds of jobs are part of B.C.'s critical minerals sector?

- Heavy equipment operators
- Transport truck drivers
- Underground production and development miners
- Mining and quarrying supervisors
- Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics

Growth opportunity

Growing global demand for clean technologies creates opportunities to expand B.C.'s critical minerals value chain.

- New mining, processing and manufacturing projects can generate employment across the province and enable B.C. to capture more economic value from its mineral resources.
- BC's mining workforce could grow by 5,400 to more than 12,000 workers over the next decade.
- Critical mineral development can support economic growth in northern, rural and Indigenous communities.



Workforce challenge

B.C. will need more workers with the requisite skills to support critical minerals development.

- Employers face shortages in key occupations, including heavy equipment operators, industrial electricians and geoscientists.
- Mining struggles to attract youth due to concerns about safety, remote work locations and time away from family and community. Women also remain underrepresented.
- Training can be hard to access in communities seeking to benefit from local projects.

What will unlock growth?

Improve access to training

Governments should provide targeted funding to employers, industry and training providers to expand training opportunities for local workers.

Strengthen recruitment

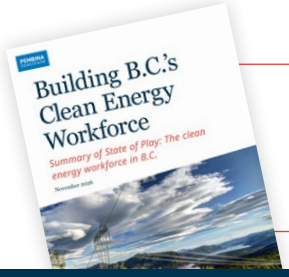
Employers and industry should promote modern mining careers by highlighting the competitive wages and technological advances that have improved safety.

Coordinate workforce planning

Governments should bring together industry, Indigenous communities and training providers to align workforce planning and training with labour market needs.

Why does this matter for B.C.?

Critical minerals represent one of B.C.'s strongest opportunities to grow its resource economy while supporting the global transition to cleaner technologies. With a strong workforce strategy that includes planning, skills development and training, new projects can create lasting economic opportunities for communities across the province.



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

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