

## **PIPELAYER**

**Job Description:** With all the oil and gas extraction, gas processing, and refining activity taking place in North Dakota comes the need for new infrastructure to transport products. This is especially true for new pipelines. Pipelayers are the individuals whose job it is to construct and properly install the pipelines. They have the responsibility to ensure that trenches are dug to the proper grade and slope using levels and/or lasers; they connect pipe sections and seal joints using welding equipment, cement, or adhesives; they cut pipes to required lengths; and they cover the installed pipe with earth or other materials. They may also tap and drill holes into the pipes to introduce auxiliary (secondary) lines or devices. This is a job that requires significant strength and working in restrictive outdoor spaces.



**Needed Skills and Education:** Pipelayers usually work as members of a construction team. They need to know how to use and operate both simple hand and power tools and more sophisticated electronic measuring equipment. A high school or GED diploma is usually needed for entry-level positions, and many companies provide on-the-job training. Apprenticeship programs provide workers with comprehensive training and require at least 144 hours per year of related classroom instruction. Post-secondary vocational-technical schools and community colleges also offer coursework for pipelayers/pipefitters.

**Wages:** In North Dakota, the average annual wage for pipelayers is \$37,280, which is slightly less than the national average annual wage of \$39,970. The entry-level hourly pay is \$13.74, which increases to \$22.23 for experienced workers. There is an increasing demand for pipelayers in North Dakota and nationally.

**Other information:** Job opportunities for pipelayers are expected to be good as some employers report difficulty finding qualified professionals. In addition, many older workers are expected to retire over the next 10 years, which will result in more job openings for replacements. Pipelayers need to be alert to safety issues and wear required safety clothing and gear, including hearing and eyewear protection.

Find out more at [www.rureadynd.com](http://www.rureadynd.com).