

College of Alameda Diesel Mechanics Program

Course Description: The COA Diesel Mechanics Program provides students of all experience levels with comprehensive knowledge and skills covering Diesel Engines and Truck Mechanics and Chassis Systems. Through lecture and hands-on lab courses, students learn the skills required to troubleshoot and repair defective parts in mechanical, electrical and electronic systems. They also use computers to diagnose equipment and research information, perform preventative maintenance, operate shop machinery and equipment as well as select and use precision tools involved in the repair and maintenance of mechanical and electronic systems.

Prerequisites: No prerequisites are required, but students are required to bring a basic set of hand tools to lab courses. Due to the use of computer controls on trucks and information acquisition required to diagnose and repair diesel systems, a good working knowledge of computers and the Internet is well advised.

Hours Offered: Day and evening classes are available.

Length of Program: Two years full-time.

Career Information

Career Path: You can usually get an entry-level job as a lube person, tire person, fuel person or utility person (mechanic's trainee) with little or no experience. These positions perform support services such as changing oil filters or greasing chassis and are a good starting point to begin learning hands-on skills and tool usage. From there, individuals can sign up for an apprentice program, which is usually a four-year commitment. Many students in the Diesel Mechanics program also work as apprentices. With enough experience an apprentice can become a journeyman, a fully qualified diesel mechanics professional who can work independently. Many opportunities beyond the journey-level exist as well, such as management or inspection.

Nature of the Work: Diesel Mechanics at the journey-level work independently diagnosing, troubleshooting and solving mechanical and electrical problems. The job requires professional judgment and communication skills. Diesel and Truck Mechanics is a hands-on career, so physical fitness is a crucial job qualification. Odd hours such as graveyard shifts are often required of those getting started in the field.

Work Environment: Diesel and Truck Mechanics work in a shop environment surrounded by equipment used on the job. The work can sometimes be dirty and physically demanding while other aspects of the job require patience and precise hand-eye coordination. Diesel and Truck Mechanics must sometimes work outside in all kinds of weather. Because of the physical nature of this work, dress is always casual. Steel toed boots and/or hard hats may be required.

Specific Jobs Available to Graduates: Journeyman, Power Mechanic, Chassis mechanic, Field Service Technician, Power-Train Mechanic, Equipment Inspector, Service Writer, Foreman, Supervisor, Manager, Trainer, Welder/Fabricator, Air Conditioning/Refrigeration Technician, Marine Diesel

Industries Employing Graduates of this Program: Cummins West, Inc., Peterson Tractor & Power Systems, Valley Industrial, Golden Gate Truck Center, Eaton Corporation, Bendix Air, etc.

Industry Pay Scales: Starting Pay \$25,000-\$30,000 per year; Journeyman \$55,000-\$63,000 per year; Advanced Positions \$75,000-\$100,000 per year.