



Job Situation

Construction and demolition sites, highways. Sometimes travel and temporary accommodations on-site. Reporting to Site Supervisors.

Weekly Hours of Work

45

Overtime

As required

Monthly Salary

\$4,400

Student Loan – Owing

\$3,000

Student Loan – Monthly Payment

\$150

Duties

Operate heavy equipment. Co-operate with other equipment operators and truck drivers. Perform basic equipment maintenance. Keep records.

Prospects

Site supervision. Self-employment. Contracting.

Job Title

Heavy Equipment Operator

National Occupational Classification (NOC)

7421

Job Description

Heavy equipment operators are the brains behind the mechanical muscle on a construction site. Cool heads and sure hands are required—the machines and their loads are enormous and can present a serious hazard to the operators and especially to other workers on foot. It can be dusty work or a real mud bath, depending on weather conditions, and most operators are hardy souls.

The bulldozers are first on the scene of highway construction, clearing brush and removing stumps and other obstructions. Then more dozers, backhoes, loaders, and graders arrive to excavate, move, load and grade earth, rock, and gravel. There will also be ditching and draining to do and culverts and construction materials to place. You work on your own for hours at a time, communicating your movements and intentions on CB radio or with hand signals.

You take a logical, methodical, organized approach. Slow and steady wins the race, saving fuel and wear and tear on the machines. Your patience and perseverance is defiantly needed; speed only gets the job done quickly not right. The work requires focus and concentration, especially when working close to other people, buildings or machines. Dexterity and good eye-to-hand co-ordination are also essential to get the best out of the equipment without taking your eyes off the business end of the machine. You can perform surprisingly delicate operations with the enormous machines, like picking up a single small boulder, or your lunch box!

Heavy equipment is used in almost all construction, in road maintenance, surface mining, logging operations, and the maintenance of public works and utilities. Operators who are willing to travel can find high paying jobs in remote areas, building dams and mines or opening up new townsites where they live in trailers or temporary bunkhouses. Other operators with some talent for business might buy their own equipment and become contractors in their local area.