



Understanding Green Jobs in New Jersey

Everyone seems to be talking about “green jobs” and the need to train workers to fill them. You may even be thinking about how you can “go green” and make money doing it. But what are green jobs, really? What do you need to know to get one? And where are these jobs concentrated in New Jersey? This brochure will help you to explore whether pursuing a green job — and green training — is right for you. It explains what green jobs are, identifies the sectors where they exist in the state, and gives you resources for finding more information.



What *IS* a green job?

Most green jobs are actually traditional jobs, some of which may require a “green layer” of skills. According to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, green jobs are either:

- Jobs in businesses that produce goods or provide services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources.
- Jobs in which workers’ duties involve making their establishment’s production processes more environmentally friendly or use fewer natural resources.¹

Which green jobs are in New Jersey and what skills do they require?

Federal policy and the New Jersey Energy Master Plan, which sets energy policy for the state, focus on reducing energy use and promoting clean and renewable energy sources. With these priorities, and growing public interest in all things green, some experts expect green jobs to grow well into the future.

The range of green jobs and their growth patterns are still emerging, however. Right now, the demand for workers who have green skills and credentials is largest for those who already have a job, as many employers use their current workforce to transition to green products, services, and processes.² For the near future, demand for new hires, especially at the entry-level, may be limited. Nearly 2% of recent online job postings in New Jersey (which may not represent all open jobs) require workers who have green skills or credentials, as well as traditional skills and education.³

Three sectors where green companies and green jobs can be found in New Jersey include:


Energy Efficiency (EE) – Green Building/Construction/Design: One of the largest areas for green jobs, companies in this group offer products and services that improve the energy efficiency of buildings and the efficiency of energy storage and distribution, such as Smart Grid technologies. Other activities include green retrofits for energy and water efficiency, and home and business energy audits.

¹ Source: Notice of Comments Received and Final Definition of Green Jobs, 2010, p. 57511

² New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Green Jobs Employer Demand Interviews, September 2011.

³ New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Demand Analysis of New Jersey Online Job Postings, September 2011.





Some jobs in Energy Efficiency that may require green skills:

- **Engineers and Manufacturing Workers** who design and create EE products;
- **Architects, Construction Managers, and Construction Laborers** who design and build new green structures or weatherize buildings; and
- **Energy Auditors** who find ways to reduce energy use in homes and buildings.

Green Energy Production/Clean and Renewable Energy (RE): A smaller group than EE, RE companies generate electricity, heat, or fuel from clean or renewable sources such as natural gas, nuclear power, wind, biomass, geothermal, solar, ocean, hydropower, landfill gas, and municipal solid waste. Some RE firms research, develop, or manufacture products in the green energy supply chain (i.e., wind turbine parts), while others sell, support, install, and repair RE infrastructure and technologies. New Jersey has a large solar industry, while other areas of RE are emerging, sometimes rapidly, including biofuels and natural gas. Still others will grow later — such as wind industry jobs, many of which will not surface in New Jersey for years, as an offshore wind farm is still being planned.

Some jobs in RE that may require green skills include:


- **Electricians and Roofers** who install solar panels,
- **Scientists** working in biofuels plants,
- **Engineers** designing solar panels, and
- **Sales and Customer Service Workers** who support RE products.

Green Processes/Sustainability: Green jobs are also developing in a range of businesses that use green processes to reduce their impact on the environment. Some new occupations in this group include job titles such as **Corporate Social Responsibility Manager, Environmental Health and Safety Manager,** and **Chief Sustainability Officer.**

Green jobs also exist in other sectors in New Jersey, including environmental remediation and waste management, agriculture, and others, but in smaller numbers.

What skills and credentials are needed for green jobs in New Jersey?

Employers agree that traditional job skills and education are most important for the majority of green jobs. “Green credentials,” such as a certification from the Building Performance Institute for energy auditors, may also be needed, but they are often not enough on their own to get you the job. Scan job postings carefully for traditional and green education, training, and experience requirements.





Resources


The following links provide additional information:

<http://greenjobsnj.com/> This Web site will provide more information on green jobs and training in New Jersey.

<http://www.jobs4jersey.com/> The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Web site provides information on job openings in a variety of industries, links to general career development and Unemployment Insurance resources, One-Stop Career Center office locations, and professional services groups. Users of the site can also access NJ OnRamp, a tool that allows job seekers to search for jobs, build and upload their résumés, and perform job matches of their skills with skills demanded in open job postings.

<http://www.NJCAN.org/> The New Jersey Career Assistance Navigator Web site can help you find assistance in planning your career, including links to information on schools and financial aid.

<http://www.njtopps.com/> This Web site provides a searchable list of education providers in New Jersey and allows you to compare the employment outcomes of select programs. Before signing up, examine training programs with an eye toward course requirements and costs, partnerships with employers and job placement rates, and accreditations.





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