

# ***THE BUILDERS***

Data Centers #8 · Teens 10-15

with Dess, the Infrastructure Guard and Lena Ashgrove of Channel 5



# ***CREDITS***

The Builders · Data Centers #8 · Teen edition (ages 10–15)

Story and production: GOTB Consulting, Chicago

Lead: Dess · Heroes: Commons, Gridline, Undertow, The Auditor · On screen: Lena Ashgrove,  
Channel 5

## ***AI-GENERATED ART, FICTIONAL CHARACTERS***

All characters, the town of Prairie Bend and Channel 5 are fictional. Any resemblance to real people is a coincidence. No real logos are shown. Real institutions are described by role. Every number in this book was checked against public sources before printing; see 'Sources' near the end.

Site safety: never enter an active construction site; workers wear hard hats, safety glasses and harnesses at height.

© 2026 GOTB Consulting. All rights reserved.

# THE CREW



## DESS

Our lead. Asks who built it.



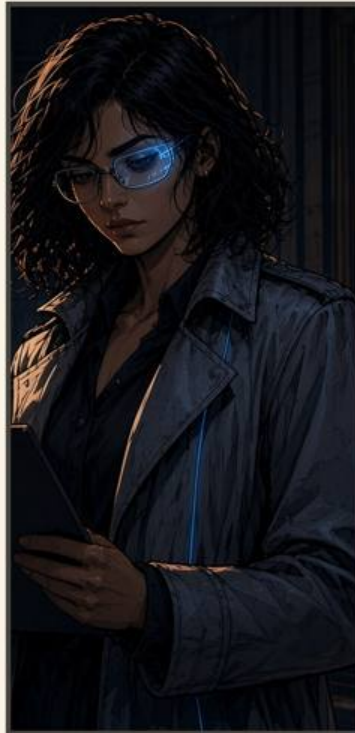
## COMMONS

Hero of crews. Lantern up.



## UNDERTOW

Knows every pipe.



## THE AUDITOR

Sees and reports. Cannot stop anything.

NIGHT SITE



DESS

FOUR ISSUES: RAILS, RUNWAYS, FIBER. NONE OF IT BUILDS ITSELF.



**COMMONS**

EVERY NETWORK YOU'VE SEEN THIS ARC STARTED AS A CREW LINED UP AT DAWN.

## THE PANEL



**THE AUDITOR**

VERIFIED

ELECTRICIANS, 2025: ABOUT 821,000 JOBS. MEDIAN PAY \$63,190. THE MEDIAN FOR ALL JOBS: \$50,980.

### FACT FILE

Electricians held about 821,000 jobs in 2025; median pay \$63,190 (May 2025), \$30.38/hour. Median for all U.S. occupations, May 2025: \$50,980.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"; U.S. BLS, OOH, "Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters"



**LENA (ON SCREEN)**

PROJECTED GROWTH: 9% BY 2035, MUCH FASTER THAN AVERAGE.  
ABOUT 72,700 OPENINGS A YEAR.

#### FACT FILE

Electrician jobs projected to grow 9% 2025-2035 ("much faster than average"; all occupations 3%); about 72,700 openings a year.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"



DESS

THE PATH: HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA, THEN A 4- OR 5-YEAR APPRENTICESHIP. ABOUT 2,000 PAID HOURS A YEAR.

#### FACT FILE

Most electricians learn through a 4- or 5-year apprenticeship, typically 2,000 hours of paid on-the-job training each year plus technical instruction. A high school diploma or equivalent is required.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"



## THE EXAM

## THE AUDITOR

MOST STATES REQUIRE ELECTRICIANS TO PASS A TEST AND GET LICENSED. CODE IS A SAFETY LANGUAGE.

## FACT FILE

Most states require electricians to pass a test and be licensed.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"

DATA-CENTER FLOOR



**GRIDLINE**

THE LABOR DEPARTMENT SAYS AI AND DATA CENTERS ARE RAISING POWER DEMAND. THAT MEANS GRID UPGRADES AND MORE ELECTRICIANS.

#### FACT FILE

BLS expects AI and data-center demand to raise electricity demand, requiring grid upgrades and creating jobs for electricians.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"



**UNDERTOW**

PLUMBERS AND FITTERS: ABOUT 510,600 JOBS, \$63,800 MEDIAN, 7% GROWTH. THEIR APPRENTICES STUDY MATH, PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY.

#### FACT FILE

Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters held about 510,600 jobs in 2025; median \$63,800; projected +7%; about 42,000 openings a year. Plumbers/fitters: 4- or 5-year apprenticeship, typically 2,000 paid hours a year plus instruction including math, applied physics and chemistry.

Source: U.S. BLS, 00H, "Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters"



LINE WORK · DUSK

## COMMONS

LINE INSTALLERS AND REPAIRERS: MEDIAN PAY \$95,320. THEY WORK AT HEIGHT, IN WEATHER.

### FACT FILE

Electrical power-line installers and repairers, 2025 median pay \$95,320.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"

## THE PAY LADDER



**LENA (ON SCREEN)**

APPRENTICES EARN LESS AT FIRST. THEIR PAY RISES AS THEIR SKILLS GROW.

### FACT FILE

Unions and contractor associations, among others, sponsor apprenticeship programs; apprentice pay rises as they learn.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"

WHO SPONSORS?



## THE AUDITOR

UNIONS, CONTRACTOR GROUPS AND EMPLOYERS SPONSOR PROGRAMS.  
ASK WHO RUNS YOURS.

### FACT FILE

Unions and contractor associations, among others, sponsor apprenticeship programs; apprentice pay rises as they learn.

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"



**COMMONS**

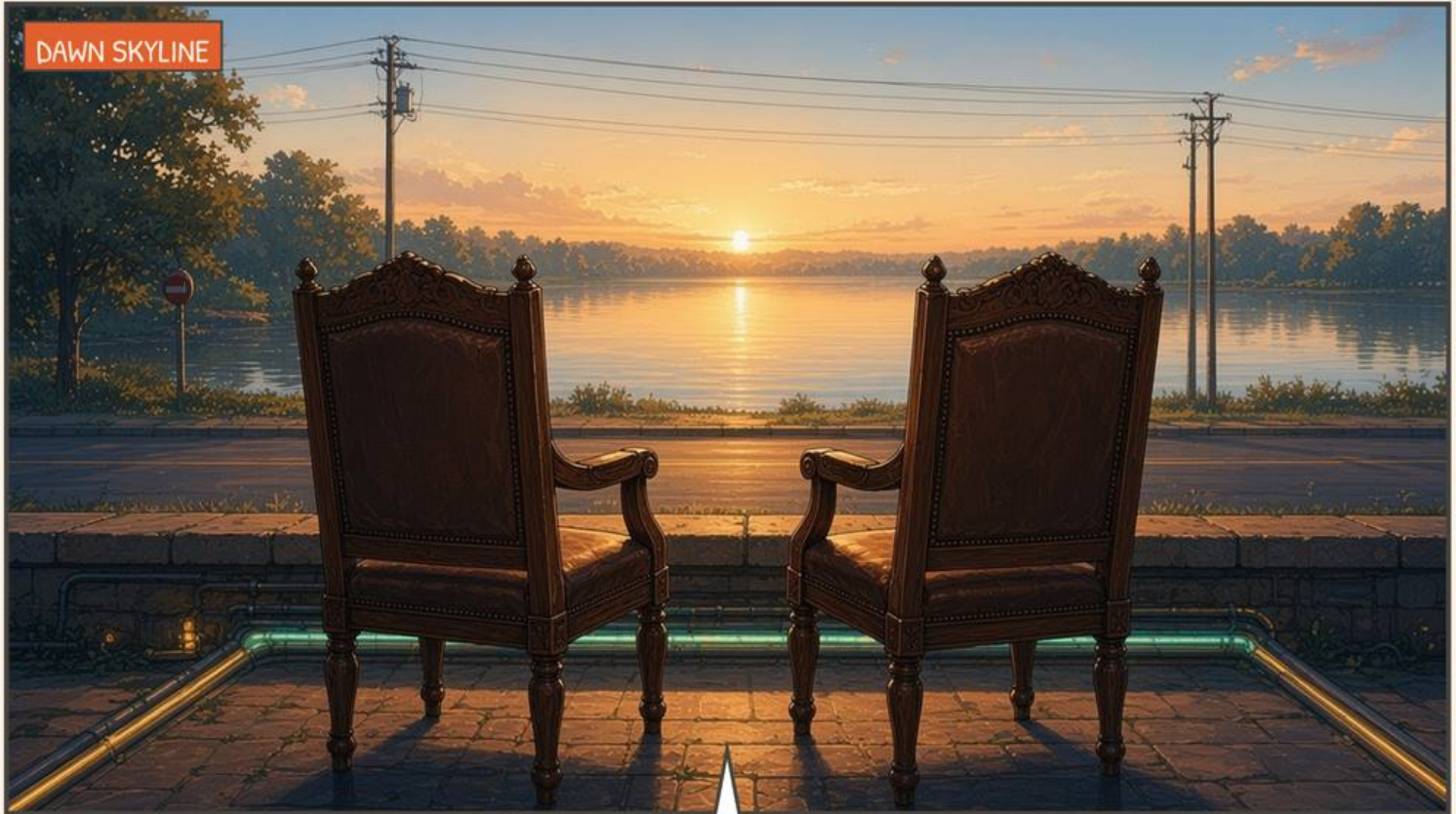
BIG PROJECTS BRING A QUESTION: WILL LOCAL PEOPLE GET TRAINED FOR THESE JOBS?

HARD HAT IN HAND



DESS

POWER, WATER, ROADS, RAILS, RUNWAYS, FIBER. SOMEONE'S HANDS  
BUILT EVERY PIECE.



DESS

ARC TWO, DONE. THE CITY MOVES BECAUSE PEOPLE BUILT IT.

GOTB Consulting works on the infrastructure and procurement behind projects like these.

# BY THE NUMBERS

**821,000**

Electrician jobs in 2025. Median pay \$63,190. (BLS)

**\$50,980**

Median pay for all U.S. occupations, May 2025. (BLS)

**+9% • 12,100**

Projected electrician growth 2025–2035; openings a year. (BLS)

**4-5 YEARS**

Typical apprenticeship: about 2,000 paid hours a year plus classes. (BLS)

**510,600 • \$63,800**

Plumber, pipefitter and steamfitter jobs; median pay. Growth +7%. (BLS)

**\$95,320**

Median pay for power-line installers and repairers, 2025. (BLS)

# TWO SIDES

The strongest case on each side, labeled. Nonpartisan.

## **HIRE WHO'S READY**

Schedules are real. A delayed project costs everyone, including workers waiting for the next job.

## **TRAIN LOCAL FIRST**

If the jobs leave town every evening, neighbors carry the noise and get none of the paychecks.

## **ASK IN PUBLIC**

Who sponsors the apprenticeships, how many seats, and who gets them?

## **WHAT BOTH SHARE**

Safe sites, skilled crews, good pay, decisions made in the open.

## **YOUR TURN**

Which trade would you try first? \_\_\_\_\_

# ***BUILDER WORDS***

## ***APPRENTICESHIP***

Paid on-the-job training plus classroom learning.

## ***JOURNEY-LEVEL***

A worker who has finished an apprenticeship.

## ***LICENSE***

State permission to work, earned by passing a test.

## ***ELECTRICAL CODE***

The safety rules for wiring.

## ***PIPEFITTER***

A worker who builds high-pressure pipe systems.

## ***MEDIAN PAY***

Half earn more, half earn less.

# QUICK QUIZ

## 1. ELECTRICIAN JOBS IN 2025?

a) About 82,000 b) About 821,000

## 2. TYPICAL APPRENTICESHIP LENGTH?

a) 4-5 years b) 6 months

## 3. MEDIAN LINE-WORKER PAY?

a) \$15,320 b) \$35,000

## 4. DO APPRENTICES GET PAID?

a) Yes b) No

## ANSWERS

1 b · 2 a · 3 a · 4 a

# SOURCES

Full list with fact IDs: FACT\_BASE.md and NUMBER\_CHECK.md (GOTB internal).

## ***U.S. BLS***

U.S. BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook, "Electricians"

## ***U.S. BLS***

U.S. BLS, OOH, "Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters"

# ***ABOUT GOTB CONSULTING***

## ***WHO WE ARE***

A Chicago firm working on infrastructure and procurement for the systems communities depend on.

## ***DATA CENTERS***

Siting, delivery and community questions.

## ***POWER***

Grid connections, substations and lines.

## ***WATER***

Supply, treatment and cooling.

## ***PUBLIC WORKS***

Roads, pipes and public spaces.

# ***THE END***



## ***THE CITY MOVES BECAUSE PEOPLE BUILT IT.***

Next time: more from the Infrastructure Guard.

***GOTB CONSULTING • CHICAGO***

Data centers • Power • Water • Public works

AI-generated art, fictional characters