

Spotlight on Drilling and Service Rig Helpers, Labourers and Semi-skilled workers



Drilling and service rigs dot the Canadian landscape, and play an important role in meeting our everyday needs for petroleum products. Without these rigs, we would not have heat for our homes, fuel for our cars or everyday products that are made out of plastic. People who work on these impressive rigs play a key role in offshore and onshore oil and gas exploration and production!

Once a company's geoscience team has identified potential oil and gas reserves, a drilling crew uses mechanical and computerized equipment to drill the first hole for an oil or gas well. A service rig crew then prepares the well for production. The service crew returns periodically throughout the life of the well to maintain, improve production and eventually shut it down.

Drilling and service rigs vary in type and size, depending on well depths. Offshore drilling and service rigs are typically combined and work just like those used in land-based operations.



Workers in the field.
Courtesy of Enerplus.



What do Drilling and Service Rig Helpers, Labourers and Semi-skilled workers do?

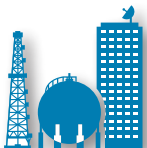
There are two entry-level jobs:

- **Floorhands:** Floorhands on drilling crews assist in placing pipe into wells, collect samples of drill debris for analysis and clean and maintain equipment. Floorhands on service crews assist with moving the rigs and equipment from one site to another, and help move tubing in and out of the well. They also keep the rig, equipment and site tidy.
- **Leasehands:** Leasehands typically load and unload trucks, clear debris from walkways, clean tools and put things away.



How do I become a Drilling and Service Rig Helper, Labourer and Semi-skilled worker?

At a minimum, you will need a high school diploma, clean drug and alcohol test results, and a valid driver's license. Employers also seek people in good physical condition with strong work ethics and willingness to learn. Once hired, the employer will provide you with safety and on-job training.



What are the working conditions like?

Onshore, work is mostly performed outdoors in remote locations. You may be exposed to extreme weather, and may stay at hotels, motels or camps. Dirt, dust, noise and fumes are typical of rig operations. You might be required to lift items that weigh more than 25 kilograms. Following safety protocols is essential, as some exposure to hazardous conditions is possible.

Drilling rigs operate in rotational 12-hour shifts in a 24/7 work environment. Service rigs typically run eight- or twelve-hour daylight shifts. Appropriate time off is given depending on the rotation and overtime is common.

By its nature, work on an offshore rig or vessel is isolated. You may be exposed to inclement weather, harsh sea and potentially hazardous work conditions; however safety protocols are strictly adhered to. Everyone works as a team. Crew quarters and meals are provided.



A drilling rig.





Do I fit the bill?

Do you think you have what it takes to become a Drilling and Service Rig Helper, Labourer and Semi-skilled worker?

- I have mechanical ability and understand technical instructions.
- I am willing to ask questions and learn on the go.
- I am willing to do different things every day.
- I am not easily distracted.
- I can follow safety rules and precautions, and understand their importance when dealing with potentially hazardous material and equipment.
- I can handle hard physical work and am not afraid of heights.
- I can work rotational shifts and long hours, and do not mind changes in routine.
- I can handle considerable travel to and from rig locations.
- I can work and live in isolated regions for extended periods of time.
- I have the tolerance, stamina and flexibility to work outdoors in any weather conditions.
- I believe in teamwork and understand that other people will be relying on me.
- I believe that I have what it takes to be an excellent Drilling and Service Rig Helper, Labourer and Semi-skilled worker!



A service rig. Courtesy of Canadian Association of Oil Well Drilling Contractors.



Quick tips and next steps!

- Review the electronic version of *OilDriller* magazines and the brochures *A Career in the Drilling Industry* and *A Career in the Service Rig Industry* published by the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors (CAODC) at www.caodc.ca.
- Talk to well drilling and services employers. You can find some of these at the CAODC website at www.caodc.ca and the Petroleum Services Association of Canada (PSAC) website at www.psac.com.
- Look into the *Pre-Employment Floorhand Training - Drilling Rig* and *Pre-Employment Floorhand Training - Service Rig* courses at www.enform.ca.
- Check with employment centres, educational institutions, newspapers, petroleum-related magazines and the internet for information on industry career fairs.
- Visit Facebook, YouTube and other social media sites for interesting insights into life on drilling and service rigs.
- Visit petroleum industry museums such as the Canadian Petroleum Discovery Centre Leduc #1 at www.c-pic.org.
- Look for summer jobs with drilling and service companies and get some experience as a Floorhand or Leasehand.



Oil rig workers. Courtesy of Enerplus.

Want more info?

For information on other industry occupations check out www.careersinoilandgas.com.