

NATURE OF WORK

Automotive technicians use high-tech electronic diagnostic equipment and computer-based technical reference materials to inspect, diagnose, and perform regular maintenance on automobiles and light trucks. Technicians may use a checklist during routine service inspections to make sure that each critical part of a vehicle has been closely checked. Besides using a variety of power tools and their own hand tools to do their work, technicians today must rely heavily on computerized diagnostic equipment when testing automotive components. Specialization in large shops are on the upswing. All types of service technicians need to be familiar with at least the basic principles of electronics.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Almost half of automotive technicians work over 40 hours per week. Weekends and evening hours are common. Technicians generally work indoors in a well-ventilated and well-lighted shop. They frequently work with dirty and greasy parts and in awkward positions. Technicians need to be able to lift heavy parts and tools. Minor cuts, burns, and bruises are common. Serious accidents are prevented by keeping the shop clean and orderly.

TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

These companies prefer technicians who have had formal college training. Courses in automotive repair, electronics, physics, chemistry, English, computers and mathematics will assist a service technician in the problem solving involved in this field. Besides electronics and computers, technicians will need to learn the science behind the alternate-fuel vehicles that are appearing on the market. San Juan College offers training in specialty courses for Chrysler, GM, and Toyota. Employers are sending their experienced technicians to manufacturer training centers to learn to repair new models and the new equipment that is being installed in today's cars.

JOB OUTLOOK

Employment of automotive technicians is expected to increase as fast as the average through the year 2016. The best opportunities will go to the persons who possess a good work ethic, diagnostic and problem-solving abilities, and training in electronics, as well as computer knowledge. To work for these companies an ASE certification is required.

CAREER OPTIONS

Automotive Technicians

ESTIMATED SALARY RANGE

Nationally — \$25,300-\$57,700

New Mexico — \$22,600-\$51,900

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Automotive Body and Related Repairers, Diesel Service Technicians and Mechanics and Small Engine Mechanics.

SJC Basic Program Information

These special Automotive Technology programs are 78 credit hours each and provide the student with the necessary skills and knowledge to enter the field of automotive service and repair. This is a non-transfer course.

Program starts in the fall semester. Students must earn a grade of "C" or better in all courses to receive a degree or certificate.

Students must purchase their own tools.

For further information go to:

www.sanjuancollege.edu/pages/158.asp

www.careers-nm.org

www.bls.gov/oco/ocos181.htm

