

Dear Electrician:

A lot has changed in the electrical industry over the past two decades. Merit-shop electricians have become some of the best trained and most sought after craftsmen in the industry. Today, government gathered data shows that union members account for less than half of the electrical licensees in our state.

Our industry has transformed into one where workers value the model of family business and direct relationships with owners.

As much of the industry knows, IEC Oregon member contractors provide local electricians promising careers in the electrical trade. Over the past decade, merit-shop apprenticeship programs have created vast new career opportunities in our industry with several establishing themselves among the largest skilled training programs in the state.

Much of the success of this new generation of exceptional electricians has come in contrast to the local union where unemployment and under-employment rates go through boom and bust cycles and are believed to be much higher than our industry as a whole.

In fact, the work picture for union electricians is considerably worse today than it was earlier this winter with more union electricians "on the books" than in February. That means well over 1,000 electricians are waiting until it's their turn to be considered for employment – unable to pursue their chosen career until someone else tells them it is ok to do so.

As a result, union locals have reshaped their dues structure in the wake of the financial devastation that, according to U.S. Department of Labor filings, has caused one IBEW local in Oregon to lose over \$5.3 million in the past four years. Dues, assessments, and other paycheck deductions could now exceed \$7,600 a year for an electrician working 40 hours a week.

These dues, market recovery fund assessments, political deductions, and other fees are money right off the top that you may never really see and are often spent in a fashion that is contrary to your personal political views.

Conversely, IEC members are reporting an increasing demand for workers. Out of work lists for our apprenticeship programs are shrinking. Add to that the uncertainty surrounding many union pension funds and you can see why so much market share is being gained by IEC members.

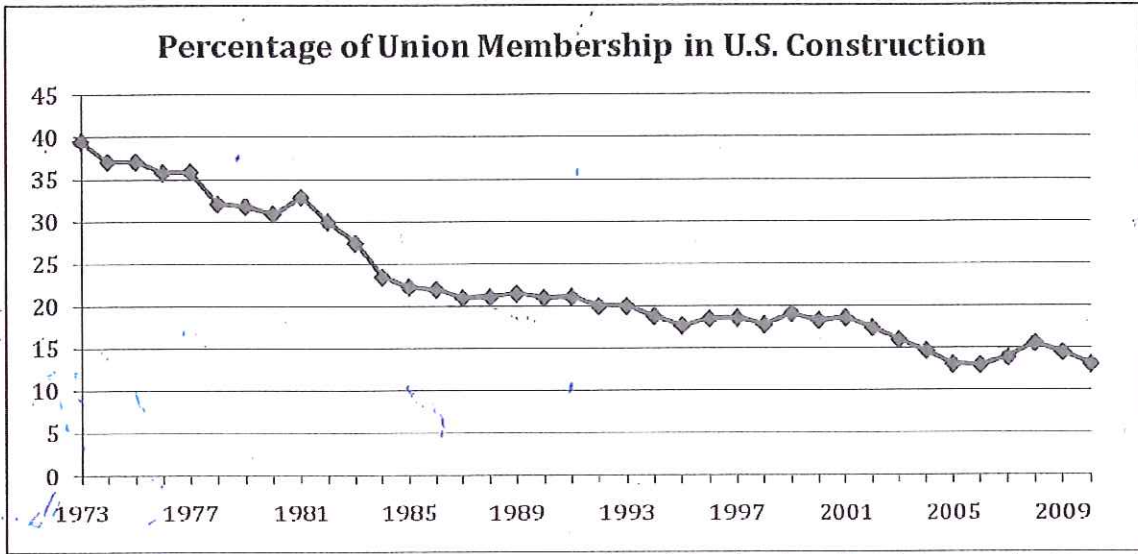
It's time to seize control of your career. Put your skills and ability to work for you and your family with a merit-shop contractor today. Learn more about IEC Oregon contractors at: www.iecoregon.org

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Independent Electrical Contractors of Oregon

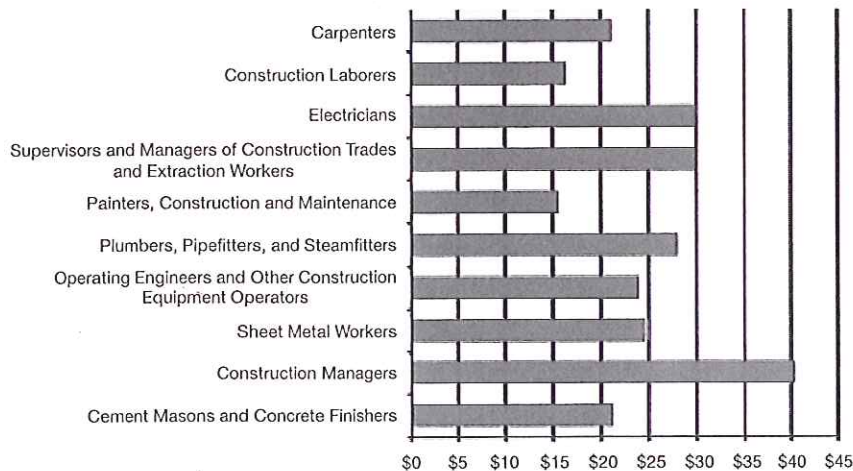


(chart is based on data collected at www.unionstats.com.)

In 1973, unions represented 39.5% of the construction industry. In 2010, that same statistic had dropped to a mere 13%.

Construction Jobs Pay Well

2010 Average Hourly Wages of Largest Construction Occupations in Oregon



(Chart and information below is directly from www.qualityinfo.org an Oregon Employment Department resource.)

Just as important as today's pay, is the future opportunity. There are 8,200 licensed Journeymen electricians licensed in Oregon. Over the next seven years, Oregon will need to replace or add a total of well over 1,900 more electricians. That means nearly one in four electricians will be relatively new to the trade by 2018 – giving you greater opportunity based on your experience and merit.