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OCCUPATIONAL GUIDE

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JOB INFORMATION

FOR

AUTO MECHANIC

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1000 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

I O W A

O C C U P A T I O N A L G U I D E S

April 1958

A U T O M O B I L E M E C H A N I C

IOWA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY
COMMISSION

K. A. Madigan, Chairman
Henry E. Carter, Vice-Chairman
Claude Stanley, Commissioner

P R E F A C E

The Iowa Occupational Guides are written to assist the Iowa Employment Service personnel in their counseling and placement activities, the public and parochial schools in their guidance program, and curriculum planning, and as an aid to employers in recruiting of their personnel.

This booklet is designed to give job information on Automobile Mechanics in Dubuque, a general description of the work performed, the working conditions, training requirements, rate of pay and hours of work. The Iowa State Employment Service has additional information on the job and the opportunities for employment for the Dubuque Area.

The State of Iowa has 35 local offices from which job information may be obtained. A list of these offices is found in the back of this booklet.

THE JOB IN DUBUQUE

The automobile mechanic will become increasingly important due to the steady increase in automobiles. The high turnover is another factor that will influence the job openings for this occupation. In July, 1957, there were 118 qualified mechanics employed by 36 firms in the city of Dubuque. These mechanics are employed by new and used car dealers as well as the smaller garages and service stations. In 1956 there were more than 700,000 mechanics working in the United States to maintain and repair the more than 65 million cars, trucks, and busses. There is a definite shortage of journeyman auto-mechanics in the Dubuque area as well as nationally. To alleviate this shortage many employers hire mechanic helpers to learn the trade. The apprenticeship program is a highly recommended method of training automobile mechanics. The training is usually

of three to four years duration, that includes working with journeyman mechanics in the various phases of the mechanical work. At the end of this training, as approved by union agreement, the apprentice becomes a journeyman automobile mechanic. The outlook nationally is for an increased number of automobile mechanics. It is expected that the increase in this skill will far exceed the growth of the labor force as a whole.

WORK PERFORMED

The automobile mechanic repairs automobiles and light trucks, inspecting and adjusting parts so that the vehicle is in good running order.

The inspection and testing work of the automobile mechanic involves a variety of operations. These include testing the operation of the motor, transmission, steering gear and brakes by driving the automobile, and also inspects motor parts for wear. Using hand tools, loose nuts are

tightened and other adjustments made. Brakes are adjusted by tightening adjusting nuts or by refilling brake fluid tank; tests strength of acid solution in battery with a hydrometer; and inspects condition of tires, checking air pressure with a tire gauge. Checking oil level in crankcase and transmission case and cleaning radiator by flushing with a cleaning compound are other jobs performed.

When a major operating unit of the automobile such as the motor, transmission and differential require overhauling, the parts are dismantled and the pistons, bearings, gears, etc. are examined for defects such as wear and breaks; cleans the parts in gasoline or cleaning fluid; replaces the parts needing replacement; reassembles the pieces, tightens them securely with locknuts, screws and bolts; oils moving parts; and makes adjustments for correct alignment and clearance. In lifting

heavy parts or raising the automobile a hydraulic jack or chain hoist are used.

Additional work involves repairing automobile electrical system, removing defective wiring and installing new wiring, and installing electrical accessories such as radio, heater, defroster or windshield wiper. Also performs other related repair work such as relining brakes, soldering radiator leaks and aligning wheels. The number of operations that a mechanic may perform depends on the size of the shop. In the large shop the work of the mechanic is of a specialized nature. He may work only on transmissions, brakes, motors or electrical systems while in the small shop all of these operations may be performed by one man.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Most of the work is performed indoors, Some repair shops are cold in winter and extremely hot in summer. The larger establishments generally

have modern facilities with adequate heating and some with air conditioning. Hoists and jacks are available for lifting and moving heavy parts. The work is dirty and greasy and the worker is exposed to fumes of gasoline and oil. Physical activities required for job include considerable lifting, stooping, bending, pushing, pulling and standing. The automobile mechanic must be agile, able to do considerable lifting, have good eyesight and hearing. Some hazards exist, such as mashed and cut fingers and hands, back injury from lifting heavy motor parts and some hazard to the lungs from exhaust fumes.

TRAINING REQUIRED

Automobile mechanics are given informal on-the-job training, and approximately three years are required to learn the trade. The first few months of training involve greasing and oiling of

cars, washing cars and making minor adjustments and repairs under supervision. The training period is lessened if the trainee has had auto mechanics in school. One of the best ways to become an all-around auto mechanic is through the apprenticeship training program. Special fields of work may be learned as automobile engine mechanic, truck mechanic, brake mechanic, wheel alignment mechanic, auto electric repairman and other specialized work. Most apprenticeship programs are three or four years and include instruction and experience in all phases of the work. There were approximately 10,000 registered automobile mechanic apprentices being trained in 1956. For apprenticeship training employers prefer young high school graduates with some mechanical knowledge and who like this kind of work.

Because the field of auto mechanics is complicated by many car model changes from year to

year, some garages require high school education while others do not. However, the person hired must be able to read well and understand what he reads. This is necessary so that he can follow written instructions in the Shop Guide and learn new methods as set out in training manuals of car manufacturers. In many shops fully qualified automobile mechanics from time to time attend automobile manufacturers' training schools to keep abreast of changes.

In most garages major tools are furnished by the employer and the automobile mechanic furnishes his own hand tools. It is estimated a full-fledged automobile mechanic will possess tools of approximate value of \$500. To start, tools valued at \$50 to \$75 are needed.

PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

There are several advancement possibilities for the well-qualified mechanic. In the large

repair shop the shop foreman, service salesman and service manager are possible opportunities for advancement. Operation of their own shop is attractive to many mechanics. Also, a repair shop in connection with gasoline service stations has become another important phase of the mechanical work.

EARNINGS AND HOURS OF WORK

Most journeyman automobile mechanics in 1956 earned from \$2 to \$3 per hour. There is a wide variation of wages depending on the size and union affiliation. The wages in new car dealers and large shops are generally the highest paid mechanics. The wages in Dubuque vary from \$50 a week in some small independent shops to \$125 a week for the larger union shops. The inexperienced trainee may expect a starting wage of \$40 to \$65 a week. Apprentices are paid from 40-55 percent of the journeyman rate for the first 6 months of work

and increase to 85 to 90 percent in the last six months of the apprenticeship program.

Benefits such as paid vacation and insurance of various kinds paid in part by the employer are available at most places of employment

The hours of work in Dubuque are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday. Overtime or double time is paid for time worked over 8 hours a day or 44 hours per week in union shops.

APTITUDES AND INTERESTS

The automobile mechanic trainee should be of average intelligence in order to follow instructions and absorb the techniques of performing the job. Practical experience gained from mechanical work as a hobby is helpful in their training as well as indication of interest in the work. Skill in manipulation of tools along with eye-hand coordination are essential aptitudes required for

successful performance of the job. A liking for working with tangible objects with satisfaction derived from own production are influencing interest factors.

HIRING CHANNELS

Many Dubuque employers cooperate with the Iowa State Employment Service in placing orders for mechanical workers. The first step in locating an automobile mechanic trainee job should be to register at the local office in Dubuque at 375 Main Street. They may have a suitable opening in one of the Dubuque firms for an automobile mechanic. If there is no immediate opening, the application entitles the applicant to consideration for future jobs in this field that match the employer's requirements. Training, job experience and aptitudes as well as personal characteristics are evaluated in locating a suitable job for the applicant. Aptitude tests are available to assist

in determining the suitability of this occupation for the entry worker. The "Help Wanted" section of the local newspaper is a source that may prove valuable in obtaining job leads. A final suggestion is to make direct application to firms in the area. The following companies employ significant numbers of automobile mechanics in the Du- buque area. Additional ones may be found in the classified section of the telephone directory.

Anthony Auto Sales, Inc.	3-7345
B & G Automotive Parts	2-7276
Belsky Motor Co.	2-5411
Bill & Bob's Auto Repair	3-5633
Bird Chevrolet Co.	3-6471
Black & White Cab	2-1818
George Bock Co.	2-3677
Callahans Used Cars	2-2542
Carew Motor Co.	3-0221
Center Grove Garage	3-6789
Central Battery Electric Co.	3-7309
Clemens Motor Sales	3-1721
Ed Dissell Garage	3-0568
Feltes Motor Co., Inc.	2-5978
Herbst Sales & Service	3-3597
Hingtgen's Garage	2-7634
Kleiner Garage	3-6503
Marshall Pure Oil Service	3-4819
Midway Motor Sales	3-6661

Mills Sales & Service	3-4429
Pline Battery Station	3-2992
Roy's Auto Repair Service	2-8467
Ryan Auto Sales	3-0651
Schroeder Motor Co.	3-2389
Tegeler's Nash Sales	3-8249
Universal Motors, Inc.	3-5735
Wayne Motor Sales	2-2764
Wilson Bros. Dubuque, Inc.	3-5781

The following companies employ sign-
ificant numbers of mechanics in the Du-
buque area. Additional names may be found in the
classified section of the telephone directory.
at the present time. The following companies are
Anthony Auto Sales, Inc. 3-1345
B & C Automotive Parts, Inc. 3-7378
Belsky Motor Co. 3-0411
Bill's Auto & Tire Repair, Inc. 3-0333
Bird Chevrolet Co. 3-8171
Black & White Garage, Inc. 3-1818
George Bork Co. 3-2877
California Used Car Sales, Inc. 3-2842
Garvey Motor Co. 3-0381
Gordon's Garage, Inc. 3-0703
Central Battery Electric Co. 3-1803
Glen's Machine Shop 3-0711
St. Daniel's Garage 3-0368
Wilson Motor Gas, Inc. 3-0778
Hubert Sales & Service 3-2887
Huntman's Garage, Inc. 3-0881
Kleiser Garage 3-0303
Klein's Ford City Service, Inc. 3-0719
Midway Motor Sales 3-0881

LOCAL OFFICE DIRECTORY

<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>STREET ADDRESS</u>
Algona	118 N. Thorington--P.O. 337
Ames	408 $\frac{1}{2}$ Kellogg
Atlantic	#4 Campbell Bldg. W. 5th St.
Boone	815 Keeler Street
Burlington	807-809 Jefferson
Carroll	517 N. Main Street
Cedar Rapids	308 Third Street, S.E.
Centerville	119 E. Van Buren
Charles City	608 Riverside Drive
Clinton	136 - 4th Avenue S.
Council Bluffs	28 Pearl Street
Creston	110 W. Montgomery - P.O. 456
Davenport	415 Perry St.
Decorah	300 W. Water
Des Moines	112-116 Eleventh St., 2nd Floor
Dubuque	375 Main - P.O. Box 757
Fairfield	104 W. Burlington Street
Fort Dodge	605 Central Avenue
Fort Madison	937 Avenue H
Iowa City	302 South Gilbert
Keokuk	1028 Main St. - P.O. Box 424
Marshalltown	107 South Third Avenue
Mason City	107-109 S. Delaware
Muscatine	124 E. Third Street
Newton	109 W. 2nd Street, S.
Celwein	City Hall
Oskaloosa	223 First Avenue E.
Ottumwa	208 South Green Street
Perry	1218 Willis Avenue
Shenandoah	417 W. Sheridan
Sioux City	341 Commerce Building
Spencer	18 West 5th Street
Storm Lake	804 Lake Avenue
Waterloo	308 East 5th
Webster City	707 Seneca Street

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