



# Rainy River First Nations Solar Project

Rainy River First Nations (RRFNs) has commenced the construction of 3 large solar projects. These projects are located in the townships of Dawson and Morley, just west of Rainy River First Nations. The projects are a result of a long process and great effort of the Rainy River First Nations. The project consists of 3 separate Photo Voltaic Projects (Solar Farms), 2-10 Megawatt projects and 1-5 Megawatt project. The project will be starting immediately.

The project is extremely large and will involve a number of construction trades/divisions. The project will consist of:

1. Fencing;
2. Civil works (site preparation, road construction, culverts, landscaping, etc);
3. Underground wiring with work to be completed by Apprentices or Licensed Electricians: International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW 402);
4. Installation of Helical Piles (Steel screws to support the racks that the panels sit on) Labourers Union;
5. Racking and support for the PV panels, Utility Workers (Must be a member of IBEW 402 and do not have to be an apprentice or electrician);
6. Installation of PV panels (120,000 panels). (must be Apprentice or Licensed Electrician of IBEW 402);
7. Installation of transformers and inverters (must be Apprentice or Licensed Electrician of IBEW 402);
8. Connection of Panels to internal wiring components (must be Apprentice or Licensed Electrician of IBEW 402);
9. Installation of power line to connect to the grid (Hydro One).

The project was tendered to a number of companies to act as an EPC. EPC is an acronym for Engineer/Procure/Construct. Basically, the project is to be designed and built by one company. The company that was selected was Black & MacDonald.

The Solar Project was approved through the Feed-In-Tariff (FIT) program of the Ontario Power Authority (OPA). As such, there are certain requirements for construction imposed by OPA. These include:

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1. 95% of the supplies, labour, etc must come from within the Province of Ontario Boundaries;
  2. Unions must be used for the majority of the work, in particular the IBEW and Labourer's Union for those activities that fit within their scope of services;
  3. Labour used must reside in the Province of Ontario;

Rainy River First Nations has stated to the EPC company that they wish to have as much First Nation participation in the project as possible, and also to utilize local contractors and labour as is feasible. As a result of this RRFNs requirement, there will be employment opportunities for the trades/divisions noted above. Black & MacDonald are the contractors, but the Union is responsible for providing the people as noted above. Some other jobs will be available with non-union works, but is much more limited in numbers.

As the project is off-reserve, there will be taxes for those status employees hired under the Union positions. For the Union Positions (IBEW 402), there are minimum requirements for employment for the **Utility Workers**:

- Minimum of 18 years old;
- Grade 12 or equivalent
- Physically capable of performing heavy work outdoors;
- WHMIS (will be co-ordinated and has to be through the IHSA);
- Must be able to prove that they are a resident of Ontario

Rate of pay for the Utility workers is \$ 17.49 per hour, with \$ 1.50 per hour for vacation. There is a cost for union membership, and \$ 3.00 per hour will be put into a pension plan or RRSP. A daily per diem rate of \$ 150.00 is provided. Work will be 5 days per week for 10 hours per day. The first 8 hours per day is at the standard rate of pay and the last 2 hours is at time and a half. According to Black and MacDonald, the timeframes for construction are very tight, therefore absences will not be tolerated. There may be some rain days, and those days will be rescheduled that week if possible (ie. Saturday or Sunday).

RRFNs representatives met with IBEW Local 402 recently and there is a need for Apprenticeships and Licensed Electricians. The IBEW is interested in having people become Apprentices. The additional requirements to become an **Apprentice** are:

- Grade 12 level English and Math;
- Grade 11 or 12 level physics or science.

Each person will have to meet with IBEW Local 402 representative regarding the Apprentice Program.

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Other employment will be available so please forward your resumes to the contact noted below at the Administration/Band Office. The contact person at the office will make arrangements to have IBEW provide information to you once we have a number of people interested.

Contact Person: Tracy Oshie-Horton  
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