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Engineering Opportunities

IN RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION

in **TELEPHONY** *and*

ELECTRIFICATION



The Rural Electrification Administration has openings for electrical engineers graduating from colleges and universities. They will work on REA's telephone and rural electrification programs.

Each year REA selects a number of electrical engineering graduates for a 6-month training course in rural telephony and rural electrification in Washington, D. C. During this period, they receive rotating assignments in various activities of REA for technical and administrative training and orientation.

Persons selected are paid while training. Most appointments will be made at Grade GS-7, \$4,205 a year, for applicants who at the time of appointment have (1) received a Master's degree; or (2) have had 6-months' experience, either professional or subprofessional. The appointments will lead to permanent career status. Applicants who do not have 6 months' subprofessional or professional experience or a Master's degree will be appointed at Grade GS-5, \$3,410 a year, and will be promoted to Grade GS-7, \$4,205 a year, after the successful completion of the 6-month training period.

WHAT REA DOES

REA is a lending agency of the Federal government, and functions as a part of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It was created in May 1935 by the President, and made a permanent agency by an Act of Congress a year later. This Act gave REA the responsibility for lending funds (which are paid back with interest) to finance central-service electric service to farmers and other rural people who otherwise would not be able to get that service.

This program has helped raise the standard of living on the farm, by improving health and sanitation in rural areas, by increasing food production, and by increasing farm income. Rural electrification is an important factor in boosting agricultural production because of the tremendous savings it effects in time and labor.

The success of the electric program was a factor in the decision of Congress to amend the Rural Electrification Act in 1949 to provide for a rural telephone loan program. This was done to bring modern telephone service to farm people. The Census of 1950, taken before this program got underway, showed that rural telephone service had actually declined slightly since 1920, when farm telephone service was at its peak. The quality of such service had deteriorated to a serious extent. Most of the engineer trainees will be assigned to the telephone program.

REA provides technical advice to its borrowers, as required and as a safeguard to the Government's loan, on engineering, operations, maintenance, and accounting in both the telephone and electrification programs.

WHAT REA ENGINEERS DO

REA engineering activities cover such fields as: design, construction, technical operations and maintenance of rural telephone systems and of rural electric distribution, transmission, and generation facilities; review of plans, specifications, construction contracts, and engineering service contracts, and appraisal and inspection of existing physical plant facilities.

WHAT REA OFFERS TRAINEES

During the first 5 months, the trainees are given on-the-job training through planned assignments rotated among the various divisions of the Agency. These assignments are supplemented by group meetings conducted by specialists. Special seminars or lecture-discussion periods relating to over-all topics are also included during this period of training.

The sixth month is used for field visits by the trainees to telephone or electric borrowers, and for visits to equipment manufacturers and other organizations or agencies offering training opportunities.

During the 6-month training period, trainees may take advantage of the opportunity to do graduate work at one of the universities in the Washington area or at the U. S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School.

After at least 1 year of service in Washington, D. C., some field assignments are possible, and engineers desiring field assignments will be given every consideration with due regard to their desires and the needs of the agency.

REA's two programs, rural electrification and telephone, offer a promising future for electrical engineers in Federal service. Many of REA's outstanding contributions to rural electrification design and construction have been made by young engineers who came into the program several years ago as trainees. With rural telephony on the threshold of new developments and extensive expansion, engineers who come into the program while it is still new will find ample opportunity for advancement and for contributing to its growth. They will also be able to benefit from contacts with top-level men from the telephone industry -- older, experienced men who are serving as consultants to REA in this program. The trainee will have the further advantage of being exposed to the whole broad field of telephony -- from technical investigations in radio-telephony to actual construction and installation of new systems.

REA follows a promotion-from-within policy insofar as is commensurate with good management practices. Vacancies are advertised in a way which assures each employee an opportunity to apply and be considered by those responsible for making selections. Engineers may advance progressively, after demonstrating ability and meeting Civil Service Commission requirements, from Grade GS-5, \$3,410 a year, to GS-7, GS-9, GS-11, GS-12, and GS-13 -- \$4,205, \$5,060, \$5,940, \$7,040, and \$8,360 a year respectively. Higher grade administrative and specialist positions also exist.

SOME CIVIL SERVICE BENEFITS

Engineer trainees will be covered by the Civil Service Retirement Plan for age and for disability. Federal employees are also covered by a group life insurance plan and under an employee compensation plan for injury or death occurring in the line of duty. These all have liberal benefits.

All Federal employees receive 13 days of sick leave each year for use in the case of illness. Unused sick leave can accumulate without restriction.

Employees having between 3 and 15 years of Federal service (including military service) earn 20 days of annual (vacation) leave a year. Those with more than 15 years of service earn 26 days. Those with less than 3 years of Federal or military service earn 13 days.

Washington employees have an 8-hour day, 5-day work week.

Information and application forms may be obtained from REA recruiting representatives visiting your college or university, or by writing Mr. Henry C. Starns, Chief, Personnel Division, Rural Electrification Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.



