



A summary of an interview with Tyya Wilkinson - a Red Seal electrician with an elaborate past in the trades. The interview took place Thursday May 7th 2020 via FaceTime.

Tyya Wilkinson has been an electrician for over 16 years and has a real knack for wiring mobile homes as well as residential houses. She has also worked in mines across the Yukon and Alberta. As a First Nations woman, she's a real inspiration to young girls all across Canada who want a future in trades.

Tyya's day to day responsibilities include:

- Being a respectful employee; punctual and prepared with your morning toolbox
- Going over daily safety precautions - with bigger projects you sometimes need extra safety gear such as masks or fall protection gear
- Organizing your tools, figuring out the plan and the materials necessary to accompany the specific needs and requests that clients have for the project

Tyya's favorite part about being an electrician:

- The fact that she can work with her hands to create something amazing in the freedom of her jobsite. She is the sole electrician on many of her projects so she can go in and do it all!
- The satisfaction of being a part of something bigger. For example, after she wires a big house and gets to see the finished product. All of her hard work and effort feels worth it.

Tyya's most challenging aspect of being an electrician:

Teaching the other trades people how to find and diagnose electrical problems. There are lots of times when a mechanical problem pops up, their first thought is that there is something wrong

with the electricity so they call an electrician. After wire testing and motor testing she can prove that it is not an electrical problem, either that a motor isn't working or pumps are broken. In her job she has to work a lot with the other trades and she often has to teach the other trades her trade in order for an equal understanding and a successful project.

Tyya's comments on the differences between working in small communities in the Yukon and a big city like Edmonton:

- In Whitehorse, you know the community and who is moving into the house you're wiring and it is a lot more personal, which tends to attract the kind of person that grew up in a small town.
- In a big city there are so many people everywhere so it's difficult to get to know anybody and to stay busy because the majority of people like to hire trades people that have either been recommended by a friend or someone that they already know, it's hard being the new person when there is no-one referring you to others, community trust.

Where Tyya sees herself ten years from now in her career:

Tyya has been working in the oil industry in northern Alberta for SunCorp. With everything going on in the world right now she has her doubts, with our plunging oil prices and the changing economy, that the oil industry will return to its previous state. Tyya is therefore thinking of going back into the mining industry, or exploring the solar energy industry. She has started to read up on and learn more about solar energy systems.

-Kate Muller