

**Occupational Profile**  
**Heating/A.C. Mechanics**  
**OES (Occupational Employment Statistics) CODE: 85902**

Cameron County		Hidalgo/Starr/Willacy Counties	
Employment 2000	Projected Employment 2010	Employment 2000	Projected Employment 2010
210	270	300	380
Absolute Change		Absolute Change	
#	%	#	%
60	28.6	80	26.7
Is License Required?	Growth to Replacement	Is License Required?	Growth to Replacement
No	0:5	No	2:1
Hourly Wage 2002		Hourly Wage 2002	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median
\$11.86	\$9.88	\$12.26	\$11.16

**Job Description:**

Heating, air-conditioning, and refrigeration systems consist of many mechanical, electrical, and electronic components such as motors, compressors, pumps, fans, ducts, pipes, thermostats, and switches. Technicians must be able to maintain, diagnose, and correct problems throughout the entire system. To do this, they adjust system controls to recommended settings and test the performance of the entire system using special tools and test equipment. Heating, air-conditioning, and refrigeration technicians are adept at using a variety of tools to work with refrigerant lines and air ducts.

**Average Education Required**

Many secondary and postsecondary technical and trade schools, and community colleges offer 6-month to 2-year programs in heating, air-conditioning, and refrigeration. Formal apprenticeship programs normally last 3 or 4 years and combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction.

**Related Occupations**

Heating, air-conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers work with sheet metal and piping, and repair machinery, such as electrical motors, compressors, and burners. Other workers who have similar skills are boilermakers, electrical appliance servicers, electricians, sheet-metal workers and duct installers, and plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters.

**Skills Required**

- Troubleshooting -- Determining what is causing an operating error and deciding what to do about it
- Installation -- Installing equipment, machines, wiring, or programs to meet specifications
- Repairing -- Repairing machines or systems using the needed tools
- Testing -- Conducting tests to determine whether equipment, software, or procedures are operating as expected
- Equipment Selection -- Determining the kind of tools and equipment needed to do a job
- Equipment Maintenance -- Performing routine maintenance and determining when and what kind of maintenance is needed

Industrial Employment Patterns		
Industry Code	Industry	Percent of Employees
1710	Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning	50.7%
8820	Self-employed & Unpaid Family Workers	13.1%
7620	Electrical Repair Shops	5.1%
5070	Hardware, Plumbing, & Heating Equipment	4.1%
5310	Department Stores	3.8%
8210	Elementary & Secondary Schools	2.6%
8220	Colleges & Universities	2.5%