

Salary & Rate Research — Building Automation Controls Engineer

Role: Building Automation Controls Engineer **Location:** North Chicago, IL (Lake County) **Employer:** Sterling Engineering (contract to AbbVie) **Research Date:** 2026-02-09

Market Data Summary

Illinois — Building Automation Engineer (2026)

Metric	Annual	Hourly
Average	\$103,808	\$49.91
Range (25th–75th)	\$83,800 – \$119,700	\$40.29 – \$57.55
Top Earners	\$138,086	\$66.39

Chicago Metro — Controls Engineer (2026)

Metric	Annual	Hourly
Average	\$124,687	\$59.95
Typical Range	\$115,933 – \$134,817	\$55.74 – \$64.82

Contract Rates — Siemens HVAC Controls (2026)

Level	Hourly Range
Technician-level	\$28 – \$57/hr
Engineer-level	\$45 – \$65/hr
Senior / Specialist	\$60 – \$80/hr

Your Positioning

Factors That Push Your Rate Higher

- ✔ Siemens Apogee & Insight **production experience** (not just training)
- ✔ Critical environment background (Microsoft data center L4)
- ✔ Multi-platform BAS fluency (Siemens, Delta Controls, TAC/IA)
- ✔ Stationary Engineer License (City of Chicago)
- ✔ OSHA 30, NFPA 70E, EPA 608 certifications
- ✔ Formal controls education (Triton College, ECC)

Factors to Consider

- ⚠ This is a **contract role** through Sterling — contract rates are sometimes higher hourly but without benefits
- ⚠ PPCL coding is a **growth area** for you, not a current deep skill

- ⚠️ No direct pharma/cGMP experience yet (but your MOP/SOP discipline translates)

Recommended Range

*[!TIP] **Don't discuss specific numbers in the interview** — Sterling's guide explicitly says to stay consistent with what you discussed with Mary. If pressed, defer to the recruiter.*

If Mary asks you to confirm expectations:

Scenario	Rate
Contract (W-2 through Sterling)	\$48 – \$58/hr
Contract (if negotiating)	\$55 – \$65/hr (cite Siemens platform experience + critical env pedigree)
Full-time equivalent	\$105K – \$125K

Adjust based on what Mary discussed in the screening call. Do NOT volunteer numbers first — let them make the first offer.