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MARCH 3, 2015

News on shale oil and natural gas

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## Top News

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### Opinion: Crude exports ban hinders U.S. shale producers from competing globally

Domestic shale producers have not received any relief from the rise in Benchmark Brent oil prices since mid-January as the U.S. continues to ban the export of crude oil, writes John Kemp, senior market analyst at Reuters. "As a result of the growing gap between Brent and WTI, the whole burden of supply-side adjustment in the oil market continues to be thrown onto U.S. shale producers," forcing them to cut output, as they lack the edge to compete in the global market, he notes. The only way to boost producers' global competitive edge, as well as protect jobs and advance U.S. energy security, is to lift the exports ban, Kemp writes. [Reuters](#) (3/2)

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### Oil prices could fall again this year, expert says

Similar to the trend in the mid-1980s, crude oil prices will likely decline again later this year amid the glut caused by surging shale oil production, said Jason Kenney, head of pan-European oil and natural gas equity research at Banci Santander, who correctly predicted the recovery of prices after the drop in 2008. However, as long as prices remain above the breakeven point, "there'll be technology gains and efficiency improvements so that North American shale can be developed more effectively at lower prices still," Kenney said. [Bloomberg](#) (2/27)

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### OPEC won't stop U.S. fracking, expert says

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries may have pushed oil prices downward, stalling oil sands production and deepwater drilling, but it hasn't stopped hydraulic fracturing in the U.S., said Joe Quoyeser, senior expert for oil and natural gas practice at McKinsey & Co. Quoyeser noted that fracking, particularly "smart fracking" technologies, will help boost the market's oil supply side. "If the industry becomes much more efficient at using seismic technology to lower the cost of accessing light, tight oil, that has the potential to put downward pressure on prices," he said. [Forbes](#) (3/1)

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### Canadian crude complements U.S. shale oil

Canadian heavy crude is the "perfect complement" for the light crude produced from the Bakken and Eagle Ford plays, considering the average densities of both crude types, writes John Kemp, senior market analyst at Reuters. This is why President Barack Obama was "poorly briefed" when he trivialized the benefit that U.S. refiners would get from the long-delayed Keystone XL pipeline, Kemp notes. Assuming that shale output growth starts in 2016 and 2017, it needs to be complemented with more Canadian imports and a relaxation of the crude exports ban "to avoid severe operational distortions in the U.S. refining system," Kemp writes. [Reuters](#) (2/27)

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### Microbes can be used to clean fracking wastewater, study finds

A study conducted by University of Colorado Boulder scientists found that microbes can be used to clean hydrocarbon-rich wastewater produced from hydraulic fracturing. The microbes can consume the hydrocarbons and generate electric current that eliminates salt from the wastewater, according to the study published in *Environmental Science Water Research & Technology*. "If we can ... reuse the water, the companies don't need to buy new water, and they could even make money from selling it to other users like farmers," said Zhiyong Jason Ren, co-author of the study. [CBS News](#) (3/2)

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### Engineering firm develops water generation technology for oil, gas industry

Ambient Water has developed technology that allows condensation and filtration of water vapor from the atmosphere to generate water for the oil and natural gas industry. In an experiment, the engineering firm found that humidity and temperature in the Eagle Ford Shale are enough to produce the required amount of water that the industry needs to bring into the play. CEO and Chief Technology Officer Keith White said the firm hopes bigger companies will be willing to conduct a pilot project using the technology. [Rigzone](#) (2/27)

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## Spotlight on Policy

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### Pa. regulator to release plans for regulating gas drilling this week

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection this week is expected to issue plans on revising natural gas drilling rules in the Marcellus Shale, as well as on regulating methane leaks and toxic wastewater. Marcellus Shale Coalition President David Spigelmyer said John Quigley, nominee for department secretary, told him in a meeting on Feb. 23 that he is willing to collaborate with gas drilling companies and help the industry flourish. [The Wichita Eagle \(Kan.\)/The Associated Press](#) (2/28)

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### Pa. governor's proposed severance tax on gas draws criticism

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf's plan to impose a severance tax on Marcellus Shale natural gas production was met with criticism from various groups and individuals in the state. "You'll see companies cutting back significantly on capital expenditures. You're already seeing it now. To add an additional tax to that would compound the problem," said Stephanie Catarino Wissman, executive director of the Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania, an American Petroleum Institute division. State Sen. Gene Yaw, R-Bradford, also said imposing a tax now may not be a good idea considering the decline in energy prices and the gas glut. [StateImpact](#) (3/2)

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### Company aims to block Calif. county's fracking ban in lawsuit

Citadel Exploration has filed a lawsuit aimed at overturning a voter-approved ban on hydraulic fracturing in San Benito County, Calif. The company argued in its lawsuit that the measure is "an illegal local statutory scheme," as only the state government can regulate fracking. [San Jose Mercury News \(Calif.\) \(free registration\)](#) (3/3)

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## API News

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### Q2 Fundamentals, March 24 to 26, Houston

Presented by Mireaux Management Solutions, this three-day course addresses quality management systems for service supply organizations for the upstream petroleum and natural gas industries. Participants will be given insight into the drivers behind Q2's importance and its value in the oil and natural gas industry. Using practical examples and hands-on application, this course is designed to progressively give you introductory to advanced knowledge of Q2 requirements and interpretations. To register, visit the [API-U Calendar](#).

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## SmartQuote

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**The better is the enemy of the good."**

-- Voltaire,  
writer, philosopher and historian

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