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News on shale oil and natural gas

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Top News

Independent drillers drive U.S. shale gas boom, report finds

The U.S. shale natural gas revolution was mainly driven by independent drillers and not by small and midsize companies, according to a report released by Resources for the Future. "Large gas producers have their own engineers who plan and design wells, but very small producers even outsource the planning and design function to service companies," it said. In the six major shale plays studied, 29,679 wells, or 77.8% of the total, were drilled by independent companies, 27 of which were independent producers, the report said. [SNL Financial \(free content\) \(9/17\)](#)

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News from the Field

Analysts: Siemens aims to capitalize on U.S. shale boom with \$7.6B deal

Siemens' \$7.6 billion deal to buy U.S. oil services firm Dresser-Rand Group is part of an effort by the conglomerate to gain a foothold in the U.S. shale oil and natural gas boom, analysts say. "They are reinforcing their oil and gas business and focusing more on the U.S. market," said Julien Laurent, oil and natural gas analyst at Natixis. Siemens President and CEO Joe Kaeser is also bullish that the deal will deliver results in spite of the high acquisition cost, noting that "it matters more what value is created." [The New York Times \(tiered subscription model\)/DealBook blog](#) (9/22)

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EIA: U.S. crude output hits highest level since March 1986

U.S. crude oil output in the week ending Sept. 12 increased 248,000 barrels per day to 8.838 million barrels per day, the highest level since March 1986, data from the Energy Information Administration showed. "The shale boom has run its course yet. The U.S. is in a good and improving position as far as oil supply is concerned," said Michael Lynch, president of Strategic Energy & Economic Research. [Bloomberg](#) (9/17)

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Opinion: U.S. shale gas, China's CTO on "collision course"

Feedstock from U.S. shale gas is on a "collision course" with feedstock produced by China's coal-to-olefins technology, Joseph Chang writes. Despite this, the U.S. will remain a net exporter of natural gas "essentially forever," according to American Chemistry Council Chief Economist Kevin Swift. The ACC expects \$150 billion in chemical projects to take advantage of shale gas, with peak investment coming in 2017. [ICIS Chemical Business \(U.K.\)](#) (9/19)

(Bloomberg via Getty Images)

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Eagle Ford drillers improve oil, gas recovery techniques

Service firms and operators in the Eagle Ford Shale are using various ways, such as improving speed, cutting costs and assessing technical aspects of oil and natural gas drilling, to boost their recovery rates. For instance, BHP Billiton has moved its well orientation by 30 degrees, driving up to 30% growth in output, said David Banks, the company's Eagle Ford general manager. Companies have also shifted from "land grab" to "sand grab" to ensure supplies of oil sands used in hydraulic fracturing, said Hart Energy Chief Technical Director Richard Mason. [San Antonio Express-News](#) (9/18)

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Continental CEO: Okla. to become third-largest U.S. oil producer

The Springer Shale and other oil plays in Oklahoma are expected to make the state the third-largest oil producer in the U.S., topping California and Alaska, Continental Resources Chairman and CEO Harold Hamm said. Hamm said his company has been developing the Springer for two years and finished drilling 11 wells in the play. The wells yielded approximately 700 barrels of oil equivalent per day within the first 30 days of operation, Hamm said. [The Oklahoman \(Oklahoma City\)](#) (9/19)

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Wyo. earthquakes not linked to fracking, report finds

Earthquakes in Wyoming are not related to hydraulic fracturing in the state, according to a report released Monday by the state Geological Survey. But more research should be conducted to find out if injection wells are linked to any of the 12 small quakes that happened within the last 30 years, said Tom Drean, agency director and state geologist. "We decided rather than having an open question on the issue, we'd have an investigation," he said. [Star-Tribune](#)

(Casper, Wyo.) (tiered subscription model)/The Associated Press (9/22)

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Chevron becomes first energy company to pass shale center's certification program

The Center for Sustainable Shale Development announced last week that Chevron is the first energy company to pass its certification process assessing 15 voluntary sustainable shale standards. The center reviewed documents and 22 of the company's production sites in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. The drilling standards "will produce meaningful results" in minimizing pollution and consumption of freshwater, said Nigel Hearne, president of the company's Appalachia operations. [The Associated Press \(9/18\)](#)

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Spotlight on Policy

U.S. needs national strategy, regional efforts to achieve shale gas potential

The Obama administration and Congress should create a national strategy for expanding infrastructure for shale natural gas and apply this regionally to achieve the U.S. potential in developing the resource write Deborah Stine and Andrew Gellman of the Scott Institute for Energy Innovation. The U.S. also needs to optimize all sectors of the oil and gas industry and create a major research effort, they recommend. [The Hi \(9/17\)](#)

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Economic Impact

Shale gas revs up U.S. manufacturing

The availability of shale natural gas is driving fast growth in U.S. manufacturing as Texas and other states see major petrochemical expansions. From 2011 through last month, companies announced 196 new chemical plants and upgrades, worth about \$124 billion, according to American Chemistry Council data. Additionally, energy costs for U. manufacturers could fall by more than \$20 billion annually by 2030, PwC predicts. [MIT Technology Review online \(9/16\)](#)

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-- Jean Cocteau,
French writer

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