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MAY 12, 2015

News for the oil and natural gas industry

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Shell receives conditional approval for Arctic oil drilling

The Interior Department on Monday granted Royal Dutch Shell conditional approval to drill for oil in Alaska's Chukch Sea this summer. "We have taken a thoughtful approach to carefully considering potential exploration in the Chukch Sea," Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Director Abigail Ross Hopper said, noting that the exploration program will still need to comply with "rigorous safety standards." Company spokesman Curtis Smith lauded the decision as "an important milestone" and proof that the Obama administration believes the company is dedicated to safety. [The New York Times \(tiered subscription model\)](#) (5/11)

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Analyzing Automation Strategies Specific To The Midstream Industry

On May 27-28 in Houston, First River Energy, BP Pipelines, Enterprise, Kinder Morgan and many more will gather at the **Midstream Automation, Instrumentation & Control Congress 2015**. Delivering over 20 operator case studies from communication strategies for remote locations and security standards to alarm management and leak detection.

Industry News

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Shell rig to arrive at Seattle port despite permitting concern, spokesman says

Royal Dutch Shell this week will tow its Polar Pioneer floating oil rig to the Port of Seattle, although Seattle Mayor Eric Murray required the port to secure a land-use permit before it can accommodate the rig, company spokesman Curtis Smith said Monday. The company does not agree with the mayor's assertion and is confident about the validity of its contract to use the port's Terminal 5, Smith said. Shell is expected to use the rig in its oil exploration program in the Chukchi Sea this summer. [San Diego Union-Tribune/The Associated Press \(5/11\)](#)

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XTO Energy eyes expansion of gas processing facility in Pa.

XTO Energy is considering building another natural gas processing plant at its Penn Cryo Facility in Pennsylvania, according to a notice. The plant, which would have a capacity of 125 million cubic feet of gas per day, is expected to boost the facility's capacity to 250 million cubic feet per day. A spokeswoman for the state Department of Environmental Protection confirmed that the company is proposing an expansion of the facility. [American City Business Journals/Pittsburgh \(5/11\)](#)

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Tesoro calls off crude pipeline project in Utah

Tesoro said Monday it will not move forward with its proposed 135-mile crude oil pipeline project in Utah due to some economic setbacks and the slump in oil prices. A company spokeswoman said the company might reconsider the project "in the future under more favorable conditions." [Reuters \(5/11\)](#)

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Union members end strike at Ind. BP refinery

The United Steelworkers Local 7-1 has ended its three-month strike at BP's Whiting refinery in Indiana after its members voted Monday to ratify a four-year agreement with the company. Dave Danko, president of the local union chapter, said some union members are expected to return to work beginning early next week. Jorge Lanza, manager of the refinery, said the company "will work with each returning employee to safely reintegrate them into the shift schedules so as to avoid disruptions and ensure compliant operations." [Post-Tribune \(Merrillville, Ind.\) \(5/11\)](#)

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Exploration & Production

U.S. shale oil output to drop next month, EIA says

Shale oil production in the U.S. is projected to decline next month by 86,000 barrels per day, the Energy Information Administration said Monday in a report. Production in the Eagle Ford play is expected to have the biggest decline at 47,000 barrels per day, while output from the Bakken play will drop by 31,000 barrels per day, the agency predicted. [MarketWatch](#) (5/11)

(KAREN BLEIER/Getty Images)

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Production starts at ExxonMobil oil sands crude expansion project

ExxonMobil said bitumen production started at its \$2 billion oil sands crude expansion project in Alberta, Canada. The company constructed new facilities, including bitumen processing and field production pads, expanding the Cold Lake Nabije project's capacity by about 20,000 barrels per day. The project in the near future could also boost total capacity by 40,000 barrels per day to almost 200,000 barrels per day, the company said. [American City Business Journals/Dallas](#) (5/11)

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Technology & Innovation

Firm to conduct trials of gas compressor technology next year

HICOR Technologies plans to perform in early 2016 field trials of its multiphase wet natural gas compressor technology in the oil and natural gas industry. The liquid-tolerant technology breaks up injected liquid into tiny droplets to allow cooling of the compressed gas at a faster rate than with large droplets, said Seshu Seshasai, HICOR chief technology officer. Company officials said the technology helps in cutting field operating costs as it requires only one compression stage, uses small space and can be easily moved. [Rigzone](#) (5/11)

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Policy Watch

BLM launches comment period for possible Nev. lease sale

The Bureau of Land Management has opened a comment period for a potential oil and natural gas lease sale covering 140,389 acres in Nevada on Dec. 8. The office is reviewing potential environmental impacts of the sale, which would involve 94 parcels of public land. Comments will be accepted in the agency's Caliente Field Office until May 22. [The Oklahoman \(Oklahoma City\)/The Associated Press](#) (5/10)

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API News

2015 API Offshore Safe Lifting Conference & Expo, July 14 to 15, Houston

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about the latest in offshore developments while sharing experiences, practices, and even information on real-life incidents. The major theme of this year's event will be "SEMS and OCS Lift Operations -- Minimizing the Risk Offshore," covering how lifting operations fit into the overall philosophy of an operators Safety and Environmental Management System, now required by the BSEE. [Read more.](#)

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API Tanks, Valves, Piping Conference & Expo, call for presentations, Oct. 12 to 15

The 2015 API Tanks, Valves and Piping Conference & Expo will give attendees an opportunity to learn about new

and existing industry codes and standards and to hear about emerging trends from industry experts. This two-day conference offers over 65 sessions in three conference tracks addressing the needs of individuals involved in production systems, pipelines, terminals, refining and chemical manufacturing and storage facilities. Each day focuses on presentations relevant to upstream, midstream and downstream. [Read the Call for Presentations.](#)

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