



## Another thing to remember: The Intracoastal Canal

Posted by [Prof. Goose](#) on September 21, 2005 - 2:13pm

Topic: [Supply/Production](#)

discussion of Freeport, Galveston, Port Arthur, the IC, and refining capacity under the fold...

From a note I found today:

There's a lot...a whole lot...of petrochemical refining around Freeport, the upper part of Galveston/Trinity Bay (LaPorte, Texas City, Pasadena, Baytown), and east toward Sabine/Port Arthur. Everything from oil refining, to plastics (polyethylene, polypropylene, styrene), butane, etc. are produced in the region. No less than 25 years ago Port Arthur refined 1/4th of the nation's gasoline...though that's down percentage wise now because we rely on so much offshore refining and ship it in and pipe it to various locales. Most every refinery is built right along the ship channel of each region, and most will get some flooding, if not a lot of flooding. There are a ton of platforms that surround the area, and one of the SPRs is located between Port Arthur and Galveston, right on the coast.

One of the biggest issues is shipping in and out of ports and down the Intracoastal Canal. Shipping terminal damage will reduce the amount of offshore product that can be shipped. Sargent, Texas...right on the Brazoria/Matagorda county line right on the beach, is the place where the IC comes closest to the GOM and Atlantic (there the IC's south shoreline is about 200 yds. from the GOM at mean tide). The IC is heavily traveled with barge and petroleum shipments up and down the Texas coast (it's not at all uncommon to go over any IC bridge and see no less than 9 tugs w/ 2 or more barges within seeing distance). That part of the IC will definitely breach and silt in with the storm, and it will take weeks, if not months, to dredge it again to allow barge traffic in and out.

One other factor to consider is that one of the nation's largest nuclear power plants is located in Bay City, right south of Freeport...and right up the predicted poopshoot (technical term, really) for Rita.

This is NOT at all going to be pretty on an economic and...just as important...an ecological scale, either. The price of gas, plastics, energy, and seafood is all going to skyrocket. Our not saving for a rainy day is now going to come home to roost.

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