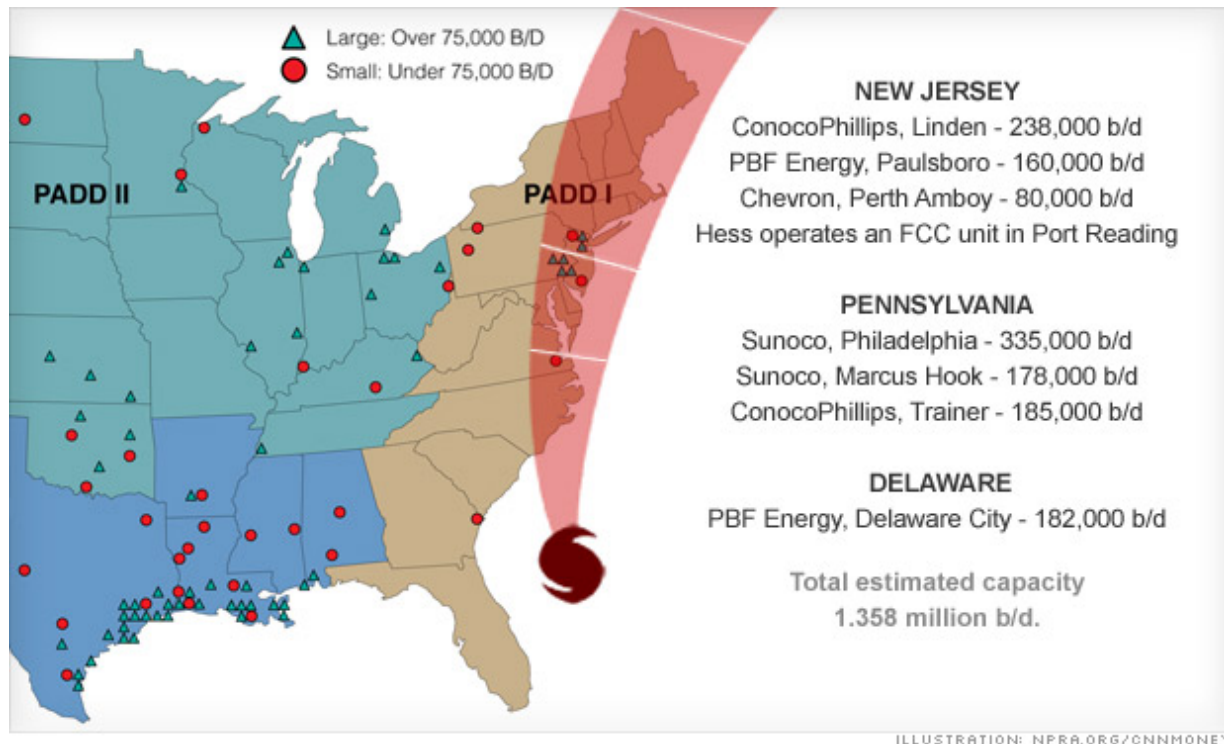




Drumbeat: August 26, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on August 26, 2011 - 8:00am

[Hurricane Irene may cause gas price spike](#)



NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- Hurricane Irene is bearing down on the East Coast, threatening nearly 10% of the nation's refining capacity that lies in Philadelphia, New Jersey and Delaware.

Gasoline futures traded in New York have already spiked, rising 10 cents a gallon this week, largely on fears there will be a disruption in output from the refineries, barge routes or pipelines serving the heavily populated eastern seaboard.

Output for the refineries in the hurricane's path is over a million barrel per day, according to the Oil Price Information Service.

[US DOE To Fill 1 Million-Barrel Diesel Reserve In September - Source](#)

NEW YORK -(Dow Jones)- The Energy Department will purchase 1 million barrels of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel in September for shipment to the government's reserve in the Northeast U.S., a source close to the issue told Dow Jones Newswires.

The Defense Logistics Agency, acting for the Energy Department, also will soon issue a solicitation for the remaining 350,000 barrels of storage for the reserve.

[US natgas rig count falls by 2 to 898-Baker Hughes](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The number of rigs drilling for natural gas in the United States fell by two this week to 898, the first drop in four weeks, data from oil services firm Baker Hughes showed on Friday.

The gas-directed rig count, which had gained in five of six previous weeks, fell from near a six-month high last week. The count is down 9.5 percent from its 2010 peak of 992 in August, its highest since February 2009, when 1,018 rigs were drilling for gas.

[Canada-U.S. Oil Pipeline Poses Few Environmental Risks -- State Dept.](#)

The \$7 billion Keystone XL oil pipeline cleared a key hurdle today, as the State Department finalized an environmental review that found limited hazards from the controversial Canada-to-U.S. project.

The State Department's review drew quick fire from green activists who have escalated their condemnation of Keystone XL in recent weeks, warning that their political support for President Obama could evaporate if his administration approves the pipeline. Against the backdrop of that pressure, a top department official reiterated publicly today that its findings did not constitute an official go-ahead for the 1,700-plus-mile proposal.

[Arrested at the White House: Acting as a living tribute to Martin Luther King](#)

I didn't think it was possible, but my admiration for Martin Luther King, Jr., grew even stronger these past days.

As I headed to jail as part of the first wave of what is turning into the biggest civil disobedience action in the environmental movement for many years, I had the vague idea that I would write something. Not an epic like King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," but at least, you know, a blog post. Or a tweet.

But frankly, I wasn't up to it. The police, surprised by how many people turned out on the first day of two weeks of protests at the White House, decided to teach us a lesson. As they told our legal team, they wanted to deter anyone else from coming -- and so with our first crew they were... kind of harsh.

[Hansen Says Obama Will Be 'Greenwashing' About Climate Change if He Approves Keystone XL Pipeline](#)

NASA scientist James Hansen, who galvanized the environmental movement decades ago with his congressional testimony about the dangers of climate change, said yesterday that President Obama has a rare opportunity to show he is not a "hopeless addict."

[How I learned to start worrying and hate the tar sands pipeline](#)

I'm their target audience. I already care about climate change. And I don't like Big Oil. Yet, it took Bill McKibben and more than 200 other activists getting arrested at the White House for me to finally care about the tar sands pipeline.

Before that, I had five reasons to leave this particular issue to somebody else:

[Libya Needs \\$25 Billion to Boost Crude Output, Challenger Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Libya's oil industry will need at least \$25 billion in investment to increase its oil production to 2 million barrels a day, the chairman of drilling-rig operator Challenger Ltd. said.

[TEPCO knew waters could reach 15 meters](#)

Tokyo Electric Power Co. predicted in 2008 that a tsunami could reach a height of more than 15 meters at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, according to government sources.

The discovery of this prediction, made by the government's nuclear accident investigation and verification committee, contradicts TEPCO's assertions that the size of the March 11 tsunami was "unpredictable."

[Energy and water – the real blue-chips](#)

The two most important natural resources are water and energy. In most cases, each is required to procure the other. First, we use water directly through hydroelectric power generation at major dams, indirectly as a coolant for thermoelectric power plants, and as an input for the production of biofuels. By sector, the two largest consumers of water in the United States are agriculture and electrical power plants. If we count only fresh water, fully 81% of U.S. use is for crop irrigation. For American corn production, an average of 2,100 gallons of irrigation water is required per bushel which yields 2.7 gallons of corn-based ethanol. This means that 206 gallons of water is needed per gallon of gasoline substitute, ethanol, before refining.

[What's eating the economy? - Live web chat with Nate Hagens and Richard Heinberg](#)

3 years on from the worst economic crisis since the great depression and things are looking...well worse really. What is going on, and what actions should we be taking? Join us here at 11.00am PDT, 2.00pm EDT, 18:00GMT on August 31st, 2011, and put your questions to Richard and Nate.

[Global Land Grab](#)

A 21st-century land rush is on. Driven by fear and lured by promises of high profits, foreign investors are scooping up vast tracts of farmland in some of the world's hungriest countries to grow crops for export.

As the climate changes and populations shift and grow, billions of people around the globe face shortages of land and water, rising food prices and increasing hunger. Alarm over a future without affordable food and water is sparking unrest in a world already tinder-dried by repression and recession, corruption and mismanagement, boundary disputes and ancient feuds, ethnic tension and religious fundamentalism.

[Are food prices approaching a violent tipping point?](#)

Seeking simple explanations for the Arab spring uprisings that have swept through Tunisia, Egypt and now Libya, is clearly foolish amidst entangled issues of social injustice, poverty, unemployment and water stress. But asking "why precisely now?" is less daft, and a provocative new study proposes an answer: soaring food prices.

Furthermore, it suggests there is a specific food price level above which riots and unrest become far more likely. That figure is 210 on the UN FAO's price index: the index is currently at 234, due to the most recent spike in prices which started in the middle of 2010.

[As Farmers' Markets Go Mainstream, Some Fear a Glut](#)

FLORENCE, Mass. — John Spinetti started selling plump tomatoes and shiny squash at farmers' markets in the early 1970s and saw his profits boom as markets became more popular. But just as farmers' markets have become mainstream, Mr. Spinetti said business has gone bust.

Farmers in pockets of the country say the number of farmers' markets has outstripped demand, a consequence of a clamor for markets that are closer to customers and communities that want multiple markets.

[John Michael Greer: An Elegy for the Age of Space](#)

Mind you, I'm not cheering. Though I realized some years ago that humanity isn't going to the stars—not now, not in the lifetime of our species—the end of the shuttle program

with no replacement in sight still hit me like a body blow. It's not just a generational thing, though it's partly that; another large part of it was growing up where and when I did. By that I don't just mean in the United States in the middle decades of the last century, but specifically in the triumphant years between John Glenn's first orbital flight and Neil Armstrong's final step onto lunar soil, in a suburb south of Seattle where every third family or so had a father who worked in the aerospace industry. Yes, I remember exactly where I was sitting and what was happening the moment that Walter Cronkite told the world that Apollo 11 had just landed on the Moon.

[New report on "peak oil"](#)

I do believe it might be possible to innovate our way out of where we are today by harnessing other energy sources like the sun. But, until that happens we are in jeopardy of boxing ourselves in with no easy way out. Here in the USA we have never had to face the issue of running out of natural resources--but we will. Oil is one commodity and water is the other one I see looming on the horizon, especially in the West.

[How to talk about the end of growth: Interview with Richard Heinberg](#)

We can deliver social goods. We can increase people's satisfaction with their lives. We can make our towns and cities and countries more culturally rich, more environmentally sound without increasing consumption and that's what we need to be aiming to do.

The first step in doing that is changing our indicator. And that's something that I believe could be done tomorrow.

[Libyan peace could bring oil bonanza](#)

The country has proven reserves of billions of barrels of untapped oil, the largest oil reserves in all of Africa. Some hope there's also billions more in undiscovered oil.

Thanks to years of underinvestment by the Gadhafi regime and international sanctions that kept many oil companies out, Libya hasn't developed its oil reserves so that they can produce to their full potential.

With the proper investment, some say Libya could go from a pre-war output of around 1.6 million barrels a day to 3 million barrels a day in ten years time.

[Crude Falls, Narrowing Weekly Gain, on Doubts About U.S. Stimulus Measures](#)

Oil declined, narrowing the first weekly gain in five, on speculation that U.S. measures to stimulate economic growth will fall short and that potential fuel shortages caused by Hurricane Irene might be short-lived.

[Oil May Fall Next Week as Libya Rebels Move to Resume Output, Survey Shows](#)

Oil may fall next week as Libyan rebels consolidate their hold on the country after deposing leader Muammar Qaddafi and begin taking steps to restore crude exports, a Bloomberg News survey showed.

[Italy says Libyan oil facilities not damaged at all](#)

(Reuters) - Italian oil and gas facilities in Libya were not damaged during the conflict and can restart as soon as security conditions permit, Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini told Italian radio on Friday.

[Oil companies ready to jockey for position in new Libya](#)

(CNN) -- International oil companies are jockeying for advantage in the new Libya, buoyed by news that damage to the energy infrastructure appears to be slight. But they remain anxious about a lack of security and are holding off sending workers back into the country.

[Libya: Can It Become an Oil Superpower?](#)

History says Libya is not a good bet to become an oil superpower anytime soon. Three decades after the Iranian revolution in 1979, production there has yet to be completely restored. Iraq needed four years to equal its output before the 2003 U.S. invasion, and the ex-Soviet Union countries required as much as a decade. "Libya is not as extreme a case as Iran, but it is not going to be easy," says Peter Hutton, an analyst at RBC Capital Markets in London.

[Tripoli Airport Attacked by Qaddafi Forces](#)

Forces loyal to Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi battled rebels in the capital, Tripoli, as the opposition National Transitional Council said the North African nation has an "urgent" need for humanitarian aid.

[Japan's Chubu Elec gets \\$1.3 bln loan from JBIC](#)

(Reuters) - Japan Bank for International Cooperation said on Thursday it would provide a 100 billion yen (\$1.3 billion) loan to Chubu Electric Power Co to finance purchases of liquefied natural gas (LNG) after the utility was forced to close a nuclear plant in the wake of the atomic crisis in Fukushima.

[Tokyo Electric sees no blackouts through late Sept](#)

(Reuters) - Japan's top utility Tokyo Electric Power Co said on Friday it expects to avoid rolling blackouts in the four weeks to late September, despite the closure of two nuclear plants in Fukushima following the March earthquake and tsunami.

[PetroChina Seeks 'Reasonable' Margins as Curbs Cut Profit](#)

(Bloomberg) -- PetroChina Co., Asia's biggest company by market value, urged the government to allow oil companies to earn "reasonable" margins after second-quarter profit missed estimates because of controls on fuel prices.

[Gazprom Defends Oil-Price Link, Says Gas German Customers Made 'Mistakes'](#)

Oil & Gas Gazprom said it's not responsible for its customers' "strategic mistakes," signaling Russia's gas-export monopoly may not compromise in its pricing dispute with European utilities.

[Explosion hits UN building in Nigeria's capital](#)

ABUJA, Nigeria—A large explosion struck the United Nations' main office in Nigeria's capital Friday, flattening one wing of the building. A U.N. official in Geneva called it a bomb attack.

"I saw scattered bodies," said Michael Ofilaje, a UNICEF worker at the building. "Many people are dead."

[Oil theft causes fire on Eni Nigeria pipeline-govt official](#)

(Reuters) - Oil thieves caused a fire this week on a Nigerian pipeline owned by Italian oil firm Agip, a government official said on Friday.

[Chinese maritime official urges ConocoPhillips to clean up oil spills or face "enhanced supervision"](#)

BEIJING (Xinhua) -- China's top maritime official on Thursday urged U.S. oil giant ConocoPhillips to finish cleaning up oil spills in north China's Bohai Bay before the arrival of a deadline set by the government, stating that the company will face "enhanced supervision" if it does not do so.

[ConocoPhillips finds new seeps in China oil spill](#)

SHANGHAI (AP) — ConocoPhillips said Friday it has discovered new oil seeps in an area of China's Bohai Bay where it faces a deadline to clean up spills from earlier this summer.

Of 16 seeps found in the Penglai 19-3 oilfield, each about the size of a small coin, only two were still visible and known to be sometimes active, the company said in a statement.

[BP: 'No fresh Macondo leaks'](#)

There is currently “no release of oil” from BP’s ill-fated and abandoned Macondo well in the Gulf of Mexico, the UK supermajor insists.

[Impact of Gulf Spill's Underwater Dispersants Is Examined](#)

A review has now been published by Earthjustice, in collaboration with Toxipedia, an online toxicology Wiki, of all the scientific literature concerning the potential health impacts of these 57 chemicals. The report finds that “Of the 57 ingredients: 5 chemicals are associated with cancer; 33 are associated with skin irritation from rashes to burns; 33 are linked to eye irritation; 11 are or are suspected of being potential respiratory toxins or irritants; 10 are suspected kidney toxins; 8 are suspected or known to be toxic to aquatic organisms; and 5 are suspected to have a moderate acute toxicity to fish.”

[Green groups seek wider review of Enbridge project](#)

CALGARY, Alberta (Reuters) - Five environmental groups are asking Canada's energy regulator to deny Enbridge Inc's (ENB.TO) request to reverse the flow in part of an oil pipeline, arguing that the company is trying to avoid a larger review for a bigger long-term project.

[How The Arab Spring Paved The Way For A Double-Dip Recession, And Why It Might Prevent The Next One](#)

Oil prices--which spiked during the start of revolts around the Middle East--have now come down due to low demand and a sluggish economy. Will the extra oil produced once the area calms down be enough to save the economy?

[Foes cite oil shale's environmental uncertainty, while industry laments regulatory waffling](#)

As predicted, testimony at Wednesday’s House Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources oil shale field hearing in Grand Junction produced more industry hand wringing over federal regulatory uncertainty and environmental push-back over an unproven energy source.

[North America's awash in oil and gas, so let's go get it](#)

So how much longer will Americans put up with paying huge costs for a "scarce" resource when there is actually a glut of it under their feet -- much of which their own government forbids them to tap?

I would guess, not much past November 2012.

[Oil Rig Goes 'Green'](#)

Pulling oil out of the Earth can be downright damaging to nearly all that surrounds where a drill bites the ground.

And yet just east of Houston, rising 172 feet above the Partin Yard, stands a 21st century prescription for minimizing the environmental pain of harvesting petroleum.

[Resources tax risks minnows: industry](#)

The nation's peak oil and gas body has urged the federal government to ensure proposed changes to tax laws designed to give Australians a fairer share of return of resources profits do not cripple small offshore and onshore producers.

[Nuclear Reactors on East Coast Brace for Hurricane Irene's Wrath](#)

More than a dozen nuclear reactors along the U.S. East Coast are being prepared for potential loss of power and damage from high winds and storm surges as Hurricane Irene bears down on the region.

Nuclear plants in Irene's path continued to operate as workers secured loose equipment, checked diesel fuel supplies for backup generators and stowed cots and food for workers who may be stranded during the storm.

[13 Plants Felt Earthquake, but Reactors Were Spared](#)

WASHINGTON — The earthquake Tuesday in the Eastern United States was felt at 13 locations with nuclear power plants, from North Carolina to Michigan, but reactors shut down at only one, North Anna in Virginia, 10 miles from the epicenter. There was no damage to nuclear systems at any of the sites, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

[Ontario urged to learn from Japanese crisis before building power plants](#)

The Ontario government will need to learn from the nuclear crisis in Japan when building new power plants east of Toronto or deal with increased costs, a federal

government-appointed review panel report released Thursday said.

The province is planning to build two new nuclear reactors at Ontario Power Generation's Darlington site in Clarington, Ont. It hopes the new plants will eventually produce about one-twelfth of the province's energy supply.

[Energy by Approving Subsidies for Renewable Power](#)

Japan approved a bill today to subsidize electricity from renewable sources, joining European nations in shifting away from nuclear power after the Fukushima reactor meltdowns in March.

[Japan's Shift to Solar Power Hinges on Banks Ending Loan Drought](#)

Japan is beginning a shift to solar energy that lacks one ingredient: bank financing.

[Honda plant wind turbine protesters 'will fight on'](#)

Protesters living near to a planned wind turbine site at the Honda plant in Swindon say they will continue their fight against the development.

On Wednesday the company said it was now proposing to build two turbines, rather than three, to power its plant, after concerns from local residents.

Opponents say the 394ft (120m) high turbines will be too large and noisy.

[Orientating the economically disorientated](#)

One of Greer's key insights is his model of the economy based upon three tiers. The primary economy is the natural processes that provide goods and services to humans without the need for human labour. These goods include things such as fossil fuels and mineral ores whilst the services include pollination and the water cycle. The secondary economy is where humans become involved, namely through the transformation of the goods and services provided by the primary economy, that is nature, into the goods and services required by humans. The final tier is the tertiary economy, the purpose of which is to allow for the distribution of goods and services of the primary and secondary economies. Critical to an understanding of this model is that the different types of wealth that these three tiers produce are not interchangeable. In short, you can't eat money and you can't grow food without the natural wealth provided by the earth's primary economy.

[The local food shift](#)

A convergence of global crises — inevitable fossil fuel depletion (aka “peak oil”), compounding effects of climate change, and unstable shrinking global economies — is likely to disrupt the global food supply in unexpectedly devastating ways.

A thorough analysis of these factors leads to an inescapable conclusion that the growing global food crisis will soon land in our own communities — yes, even in Boulder County.

[Business Studies Become Environmentally Friendly](#)

“Through the roof” is how Adam Zak, an executive recruiter, describes the demand for workers with sustainability-related job skills.

“We estimate about a 40 percent increase over last year in the search assignments we are asked to conduct for these kinds of individuals,” said Mr. Zak, whose clients include companies like Coca-Cola, Andersen Windows and Del Monte.

[Time to Start Work on a Panic Button?](#)

The Government Accountability Office concludes that geoengineering schemes to slow global warming aren't feasible, but finds scientific support for more research.



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