



## Drumbeat: August 27, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on August 27, 2011 - 9:32am

### [Irene cuts power, oil operations along US East Coast](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - New York City braced for widespread blackouts as Hurricane Irene churned up the East Coast on Saturday, leaving more than 1 million homes and businesses without power in U.S. coastal states further south.

Power generator Exelon idled the Oyster Creek nuclear power plant as a precaution as winds gained force. The plant in Ocean County, New Jersey supplies up to 600,000 homes.

...East Coast oil refineries reduced operations or shut, while pipelines and fuel terminals also scaled back.

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### [Power Substations in Lower Manhattan Are Vulnerable to Flooding, Officials Say](#)

A slice of Manhattan's southeastern tip may be especially vulnerable to a loss of electricity from Hurricane Irene, Consolidated Edison said Saturday, and officials at the public utility said it could be forced to pre-emptively shut off power in low-lying parts of New York City.

Some substations along the waterline of Lower Manhattan could be susceptible to severe flooding if the Hudson and East Rivers rise significantly because of the storm, said Chris Olert, a Con Edison spokesman.

### [Libya conflict: Rebels vow to resolve Tripoli shortages](#)

Libyan rebel leaders have announced measures to tackle shortages of water, fuel and medicines in Tripoli which the UN says are threatening lives.

### [Libya's rebel oil firm Agoco says all refineries shut](#)

BENGHAZI, Libya, Aug 27 (Reuters) - All five of Libya's refineries are offline due to a lack of crude oil production and damage to facilities, the rebel oil firm AGOCO said on Saturday, leaving rebel forces wholly reliant on fuel imports.

"No refineries are working. They can't get crude oil. Some are in bad shape," AGOCO spokesman Abdeljalil Mayouf told Reuters.

### [Diesel fuel crisis deepens](#)

CAIRO – A renewed diesel fuel shortage, which has hit Egypt's gov- ernorates over the past few days, has left many truck drivers fuming Friday.

### [Japanese Island's Activists Resist Nuclear Industry's Allure](#)

IWAISHIMA, Japan — When the boats came to start work on a planned nuclear power plant just off this tiny island, an aging fisherwoman named Tamiko Takebayashi carried out a dramatic protest: she lashed herself to the dock.

The move, while reminiscent of a Greenpeace action, was highly unusual in understated Japan. But it was emblematic of the islanders' nearly three-decade fight against the powers arrayed against them — their own government and the nuclear industry it has championed.

### [The Spin on Changing Marcellus Gas Estimates](#)

So how much natural gas is in the Marcellus Shale?

The U.S. Geologic Survey on Tuesday estimated the formation contains 84 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas, up from a mere 2 Tcf in 2002. Headlines exploded across the Internet: "Federal report boosts Marcellus Shale estimate."

But on Wednesday another federal agency, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, which just a month ago estimated the shale contained 410 Tcf, announced it was revising its number downward in response to the USGS estimate. New headlines: "U.S. Slashes Marcellus Shale Gas Estimate 80%."

### [Crude Oil Futures Advance After Bernanke Says Fed Has Stimulus Tools](#)

Crude oil rose after Federal Reserve Chairman Ben S. Bernanke said growth will resume and the central bank had tools to stimulate the economy.

Futures rebounded from a drop of more than \$2 a barrel and stocks climbed after Bernanke said U.S. growth is safe in the long run and the Fed still can aid the recovery. Oil fell as much as 2.8 percent when he failed to announce new stimulus at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where a year ago he disclosed that the Fed would spur growth through Treasury purchases.

### [US West Coast Products-L.A. gasoline surges on refinery upset](#)

(Reuters) - Los Angeles wholesale gasoline differentials surged by 24 cents per gallon on Friday on upsets at Exxon Mobil Corp's refinery in Torrance, California.

### [Shell reopens gas plant that fuels Nigeria's power grid after 2-day shutdown](#)

LAGOS, Nigeria — Royal Dutch Shell PLC says it has reopened a natural gas plant after isolating the leakage point of a damaged pipeline in Nigeria's oil-rich southern delta.

### [Kazakhstan sees oil export duty flat until 2014](#)

ASTANA (Reuters) - Kazakhstan, the largest oil producer in Central Asia, plans to retain its crude export duty at a maximum \$40 per tonne until at least 2014, Finance Minister Bolat Zhamishev said on Saturday.

### [Libyan Rebels Mass for Attack on Sirte](#)

Libyan rebels prepared to attack Muammar Qaddafi's stronghold of Sirte as the United Nations called for international support against the widespread destruction in the country after six months of conflict.

### [Venezuela oil tap to flow by '12](#)

MUMBAI: India's biggest oil investment overseas is all set to pay dividends. The country is expected to get its first consignment of crude oil in the second quarter of 2012-13 from the Carabobo-1 block in Venezuela's oil rich Orinoco Belt. The field is being developed with a consortium led by ONGC for \$20 billion.

### [BP Spill Victims Can Seek Punitive Damages, Judge Says](#)

Businesses and individuals suing BP Plc (BP/) and other companies involved in the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill can seek punitive damages in pursuing claims of economic and environmental losses, a federal judge said.

Defendants claimed the U.S. Oil Pollution Act prevented plaintiffs from collecting punitive damages. U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier said today that the statute is "silent as to the availability of punitive damages" and plaintiffs can pursue such claims under maritime law.

### [More oil seepage found at Bohai Bay platforms](#)

BEIJING - More oil has been detected near the two leaking oil platforms in Northeast China's Bohai Bay, authorities said.

A statement released by the North China Sea branch of the State Oceanic Administration on Thursday said 16 oil leaks have been detected under platform C and oil and gas are still bubbling in the water in the area of the platform.

### [Japan to Spend \\$2.9 Billion to Clean Up Tepco Radiation Spills, Kyodo Says](#)

Japan will allocate 220 billion yen (\$2.87 billion) to clean up in areas contaminated by radiation spewed from Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s crippled Fukushima Dai-Ichi nuclear plant, Kyodo News reported.

The government aims to reduce the level of radiation exposure to less than 1 millisievert per year soon, Kyodo News reported yesterday, citing Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano. Prime Minister Naoto Kan, who said yesterday he's stepping down from office, will visit Fukushima today to explain the government's decontamination plans for the region, according to a separate Kyodo report.

### [US Energy Dept Finalizes Solar Project's Partial Loan Guarantee](#)

WASHINGTON -(Dow Jones)- The U.S. Energy Department has finalized a partial guarantee for an \$852 million loan to support a 250-megawatt solar facility sponsored by NextEra Energy Resources LLC.

The Genesis Solar Project is located on land managed by the federal government in Riverside County, Calif.

### [Trains That Run Like, and on, the Wind](#)

BERLIN — It will not be easy to run a national railroad on renewable energy like wind, hydro and solar power, but that is what Deutsche Bahn of Germany aims to do, for one simple reason: It is what consumers want.

Deutsche Bahn says it wants to raise the percentage of wind, hydro and solar energy used in powering its trains from 20 percent now to 28 percent in 2014 and to become carbon-free by 2050 — targets that exceed the German government's already ambitious national goals.

“Consumers in Germany have made it clear they want us all to get away from nuclear energy and to more renewable energy,” said Hans-Jürgen Witschke, chief executive of Deutsche Bahn Energie, which supplies electricity for trains in Germany.

### [Water Use by Vineyards Is Challenged](#)

The increased use of water by Sonoma County vineyards has come under scrutiny from scientists and agencies that say it is harming coho salmon and steelhead trout in local rivers.

### [World's Top-Emitters No More Aware of Climate Change in 2010](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Residents in the top five greenhouse gas-emitting countries are no more aware of global warming or climate change than they were a few years ago. Majorities in all five countries Gallup surveyed in 2010 -- except India -- continue to say they know at least something about the issue.

### [Africa: Global Warming Behind Somali Drought](#)

Paris — The severe drought in the Horn of Africa, which has caused the death of at least 30,000 children and is affecting some 12 million people, especially in Somalia, is a direct consequence of weather phenomena associated with climate change and global warming, environmental scientists say.

"The present drought in the Horn of Africa has been provoked by El Ni-o and La Ni-a phenomena in the Pacific Ocean, which unsettle the normal circulation of warm and cold water and air, and dislocate the humidity conditions across the southern hemisphere," Friedrich-Wilhelm Gerstengarbe, senior scientist at the German Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK, after its German name), told IPS.

### [Assessing Climate Change in a Drought-Stricken State](#)

"We can't say with certainty whether this particular drought is in and of itself a product of climate change," said David Brown, a regional official with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

However, Dr. Brown added, these kinds of droughts will have effects that are "even more extreme" in the future, given a warming and drying regional climate.

### [Wading Into New York City's Future](#)

Better get used to it. More frequent and intense storms are what studies and New York City's own panel on climate change have predicted for the city as average temperatures and sea levels rise over the next decades.

By midcentury, city officials say, New York City's average temperature is projected to increase three to five degrees Fahrenheit and sea levels are expected to rise by more than two feet. By the end of the century, they say, New York City may feel more like North Carolina.



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