



Drumbeat: August 11, 2012

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[Recycling Reality: Humans Set to Trash Most Elements on the Periodic Table](#)

Almost all lead is recycled, among the only elements on the periodic table to earn that distinction. With good reason, mind you: the soft metal is a potent neurotoxic known to impact children's brain development, among other nasty health effects. Today, nearly all lead is used in batteries (though it was once put into gasoline, leading to widespread contamination, and, in places like Afghanistan, still is.) Most of this dangerous element is now endlessly cycled from battery to battery, thanks to stringent regulations (though enough of it ends up being improperly recycled to constitute one of the world's worst pollution problems.)

In principle, all metals are infinitely recyclable and could exist in a closed loop system, note the authors of a survey of the metals recycling field published in *Science* on August 10. There's a benefit too, because recycling is typically more energy-efficient than mining and refining raw ore for virgin materials. Estimates vary but mining and refining can require as much as 20 times the amount of energy as recycling a given material. Think about it: a vast amount of energy, technology, human labor and time are expended to get various elements out of the ground and then that element is often discarded after a single use.

[India's Biggest Corporate Loss Shows Singh's Deficit Dilemma](#)

"There's a problem with inflation and we can't increase fuel prices, and the budgeted amount for subsidy is not enough," Indian Oil Chairman R.S. Butola told reporters in New Delhi yesterday. "The problems are many, but something will have to be done. The loss is huge."

[Rise in oil prices on QE3 expectations should be a warning to the Fed](#)

Crude Oil prices for WTI were just \$78 dollars in July, a month later they are \$93.40 with supplies well above their five year average range, China decelerating at a rate not seen since the financial crisis, and US gasoline demand down 4.2 percent year-on-year and distillates down 2.8 percent.

So what the heck is going on in the Oil Markets? Well, just look at the S&P for your answer: Capital has flowed into assets based upon the expectation that Bernanke and his cohorts at the Federal Reserve will print some more money out of thin air in the form of some monetary easing initiative falling under the heading of QE3.

[US gas prices spike; refinery problems cited](#)

NEW YORK — A surprise surge in gasoline prices is taking some of the fun out of summer.

The national average for a gallon of gas at the pump has climbed to \$3.67, a rise of 34 cents since July 1. An increase in crude oil prices and problems with refineries and pipelines in the West Coast and Midwest, including a fire in California, are mostly to blame.

[Opec output down as crude gains](#)

Opec oil output fell last month, one in which the price of crude rose steadily on geopolitical concerns and steady demand.

The 12 members of the organisation pumped a total average of 31.1 million barrels per day (bpd) last month, a decrease of 157,000 bpd.

Iran, saddled with hefty sanctions, led the decline but Saudi Arabia, Libya and Angola also reduced output. The cutback was partially offset by Iraq, which passed the 3 million bpd mark for the first time in many years.

[Iraq oil production surpasses Iran](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- Oil production in Iraq surpassed that of its regional rival Iran last month, highlighting the impact of continued investment in Iraq and Western sanctions on Iran.

Iraqi oil production inched over the 3 million barrel a day mark in July, according to numbers released Friday by the International Energy Agency. That's 300,000 barrels per day higher than the country's average output in 2011.

[Iran needs oil at \\$127 to balance budget, more than Saudi Arabia](#)

Manama: Iran needs oil to average \$127 a barrel this year for its fiscal budget to break even, more than what Saudi Arabia needs to balance its spending plan, according to an inter-governmental Arab energy lender.

Oil prices must average \$99 a barrel this year for the 12 members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) to be able to balance their national budgets, the Arab Petroleum Investments Corp., known as Apicorp, said in an e-mailed report.

[EIA: Kazakhstan's oil production to decrease in 2012](#)

Kazakhstan's oil production will decrease by 70,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 1.57 million bpd in 2012, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) predicts.

[Tough coal market means big loss for Alpha Natural](#)

NEW YORK (AP) — Coal producer Alpha Natural Resources Inc. said Wednesday it lost \$2.2 billion in the second quarter as the industry struggled to compete with cheap natural gas and demand waned in some key markets.

[Analysis: Legal woes may spoil Chesapeake's Michigan sale](#)

HOUSTON/NEW YORK (Reuters) - Chesapeake Energy's planned sale of its oil and gas properties in Michigan likely will bring in less cash for operations or even be stymied completely because of probes into how it got the properties in the first place, some analysts say.

[ATP Oil Said to Get Funding Ahead of Possible Bankruptcy](#)

ATP Oil & Gas Corp., the oil explorer whose new chief executive officer quit after less than a week in June, arranged loan financing ahead of a possible bankruptcy filing, said two people with direct knowledge of the matter.

[Gazprom, four Turkish companies sign agreement to import gas](#)

Russian company Gazprom and four Turkish companies have signed an agreement on imports of Russian gas to Turkey via the Western Route, the Zaman newspaper reported with reference to a source in the Turkish Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EPDK).

[U.S. Sanctions Syrian Oil Firm](#)

The United States has imposed sanctions on the Syrian state-run oil company Sytrol for providing gasoline to Iran, a State Department spokesman said.

The new penalties come after the firm delivered \$36 million worth of gasoline to Iran in April, department spokesman Patrick Ventrell said in a statement.

[Clinton meets Turkish leaders on Syria amid tales of new carnage](#)

Aleppo, Syria (CNN) -- U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met with Turkish leaders Saturday to discuss the spiraling crisis in Syria, where reports of deaths mount by the dozens every day.

[US, Turkey plan for worst-case scenarios in Syria](#)

ISTANBUL (AP) - U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Turkey's foreign minister say their countries are creating a formal structure to plan for worst-case scenarios in Syria, including a possible chemical weapons attack on regime opponents.

[Libya National Congress Names Magariaf Interim President](#)

Libya's new interim legislature elected Mohammed Yussef Magariaf, leader of the National Front Party, as its new president as the country rebuilds after the overthrow of Muammar Qaddafi 10 months ago.

[Thousands file claims after Chevron refinery fire](#)

RICHMOND, Calif. – Several thousand Richmond residents have filed legal claims against Chevron Corp., seeking compensation for a refinery fire that fouled the region's air for hours and sent more than 4,000 people to seek medical care for breathing problems and irritated eyes.

[BP's Olympic Ads Seek To Erase Oil Spill From Memory](#)

In this spring's run-up to the Olympic games, London 2012 organizers announced that BP would be a main sponsor of the event—specifically, a "Sustainability Partner" helping to create the "greenest Games ever." The enviro community balked at the move, launching campaigns, circulating videos, and pranking high-profile orgs to underscore the irony. But to little avail, it seems: Despite the controversy, a survey published this week shows that the oil and gas giant's Olympic ads seem to be rekindling the public's BP love.

[The Ford Focus Electric: A bad case of range anxiety](#)

As I pulled out of the garage on West 55th street and headed toward my house in Westchester County, I looked at the range gauge and saw that I had 50 miles left on the lithium ion battery -- plenty of juice to make the 20-mile trip. (The Focus's range when fully charged is 76 miles.) But as I drove, the mileage gauge kept changing in response to my driving habits. At one point it was down to 38, but then bounced back up to 42 but then down again to 35. How many miles did I really have? I didn't know. That night, I drove to the movies to see *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, and when I entered the parking lot I had about 15 miles left to make it home. Enough, but it was still a little nervous-making. So I checked my GPS for the closest charging station thinking it would be great

if the car could recharge during the film. It turned out to be 10 miles away, across the river in New Jersey, not to mention the \$5 toll on the Tappan Zee Bridge.

[Japan: Inspectors Study Plant That Avoided Disaster](#)

The nuclear power plant that was closest to the epicenter of last year's earthquake endured more ground-shaking than the Fukushima plant did, but was largely undamaged because it was designed with enough safety margins, nuclear inspectors said Friday.

[The Nun Who Broke Into the Nuclear Sanctum](#)

The actions of Sister Rice, a New York native who grew up on a prosperous block in Morningside Heights, and her companions, ages 57 and 63, are a huge embarrassment for President Obama. Since 2010, he has led a campaign to eliminate or lock down nuclear materials as a way to fight atomic terrorism. Now, the three — two of whom, including Sister Rice, are free and are awaiting trial in October — have made nuclear theft seem only a little more challenging than a romp in the Tennessee woods.

[US nuke plant delay fails to solve storage conundrum](#)

The gauntlet has been thrown: until the US figures out what to do with its nuclear waste, new nuclear plants can't be licensed and existing licences can't be renewed.

The dramatic decision, taken by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on 8 August, is a sign of mounting pressure over the issue of nuclear waste storage, and is likely to rekindle doubts over the future of the nuclear industry. But whether it will result in a solution anytime soon is still unclear.

[Cities, schools energize savings by conserving](#)

When municipalities and school districts go over yearly budgets, they look at all the nuts and bolts. And in tough economic times, they also are looking at light bulbs.

Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Dearborn and Manchester are four very different communities, but all are trying to cut costs by conserving energy.

[100% renewable energy 'attainable'](#)

The ambition to generate 100% of Scotland's electricity from renewable sources by 2020 could be within reach, a report has suggested.

Scotland's Renewable Energy Sector In Numbers - an online portal by industry body

Scottish Renewables which pulls together figures from a range of sources - shows figures on energy capacity, output, jobs and investment, and emissions which were buried away in dense government reports.

[Hetch Hetchy reservoir debate swells with pending vote](#)

On one side are Republican lawmakers and environmentalists, including Ronald Reagan's former interior secretary, who want the dam removed and valley restored. On the other are Democratic San Franciscans, led by Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Rep. Nancy Pelosi, fighting to hold onto the city's famously pure drinking water in a drought-prone state.

[Filipinos should get used to weather disturbances](#)

Manila: Filipinos should learn to accept that typhoons and other weather disturbances would increase in intensity as a result of effects of climate change, Environment Secretary Ramon Paje said.

“Filipinos must learn to accept the growing intensity of typhoons as the new ‘normal’” the environment top official said in the aftermath of heavy rains that left large areas of the national capital region and surrounding provinces under several feet of water.



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