

US rig count drops 9 this week to 431, another all-time low

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HOUSTON --The number of rigs exploring for oil and natural gas in the U.S. dropped by nine this week to 431, again reaching an-time low amid depressed energy industry prices.

A year ago, 932 rigs were active.

Houston oilfield services company Baker Hughes Inc. said Friday 343 rigs sought oil and 88 explored for natural gas.

Among major oil- and gas-producing states, Texas lost seven rigs and Louisiana and Ohio each dropped one.

Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Utah, West Virginia and Wyoming were all unchanged.

The U.S. rig count peaked at 4,530 in 1981. The previous low of 488 set in 1999 was eclipsed March 11, and has continued to dip.