

Rig count rises by 35

Associated Press, 1-30-10

HOUSTON -- The number of rigs actively exploring for oil and natural gas in the U.S. rose by 35 this week to 1,317.

Houston-based Baker Hughes Inc. said Friday that 861 rigs were exploring for natural gas and 444 for oil. Twelve were listed as miscellaneous. A year ago this week, the rig count stood at 1,472.

Of the major oil- and gas-producing states, Texas gained 10 rigs while Oklahoma gained seven and Pennsylvania six. North Dakota gained three rigs, while Louisiana and Alaska each gained two. Arkansas, Colorado and New Mexico each gained one rig. West Virginia lost one rig while Wyoming and California remained unchanged.

The rig count tally peaked at 4,530 in 1981, during the height of the oil boom. The industry posted a record low of 488 in 1999.