

## US rig count increases by 28

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HOUSTON -- The number of rigs actively exploring for oil and natural gas in the U.S. rose by 28 this week to 1,373.

Houston-based Baker Hughes Inc. said Friday that 905 rigs were exploring for natural gas and 456 for oil. Twelve were listed as miscellaneous. A year ago this week, the rig count stood at 1,243.

Of the major oil- and gas-producing states, Texas gained 21 rigs, North Dakota gained four, New Mexico gained three, Louisiana and Alaska each gained two, while Pennsylvania and California each gained one. Colorado, West Virginia and Oklahoma each lost two rigs and Wyoming lost one. Arkansas 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.