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U.S. Energy Information
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2014 hurricane season could lead to offshore oil, gas production shut-ins

The government's weather experts are predicting a relatively mild hurricane season, but U.S. oil and natural gas production in the Gulf of Mexico could still be disrupted.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration's mean estimate is that about 12 million barrels of offshore crude oil production and 30 billion cubic feet of natural gas production will go offline during the 2014 hurricane season.

That's about 40 percent lower than production expected to be shut-in during a normal hurricane season.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is forecasting 8 to 13 named tropical storms to form between June and the end of November, of which 3 to 6 will strengthen to hurricanes, with 1 or 2 of those becoming major hurricanes.

The good news for the U.S. is that with domestic onshore oil and natural gas production increasing in recent years, offshore output as a share of total U.S. production has declined. That has made U.S. oil and natural gas supplies less vulnerable to hurricanes.

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