

Everything you wanted to know about oil but were afraid to ask



Or

Oil for Dummies

by Doug Maurstad

Short Term Gain Long Term Pain

Look at the heading for this week's article. What is the first thing that pops into your mind when you read that phrase? What goes through your mind when you think about a toxic oil refinery coming to Union County? I'll tell you what goes through mine. I think about the oil industry in general and it is a boom and bust business. It might be a monetary boom right now, but what happens when the price of oil goes back down? What happens when consumption of fossil fuels go down? What happens to the people in Union County if and when that toxic, putrid excuse for an oil refinery goes bust? What happens when Canada shuts the export valve of tar sands off? A few people will reap short term gain, but I'm here to tell you the rest of us will suffer long term pain.

There is an old saying that necessity is the mother of all inventions. When we get tired of companies like EXXON making \$11 Billion in one quarter, I guarantee you that someone will come up with a fix. When that fix happens, oil will go the way of the dinosaur. Many historians will tell you that The French Revolution started with people getting upset at the price of bread.

Let's put logic to the test one more time. With the advances in technology and the demand for renewable fuels, it is only a matter of time before consumption of oil products, mainly gas, goes down. Industry is making great strides in the availability of hybrid cars, wind generated electricity, solar power and the use of geothermal for heating and cooling.

I saw the future of geothermal 10 years ago when I put geothermal in my home for heating and cooling. My home is 2,000 square feet and it costs me less than \$400 per year to heat and cool my home at a constant 72 degrees. Let me say that one more time. I pay less than \$400 per year to heat and cool my home with geothermal.

It is well documented that it is not productive to refine tar sands to petroleum products unless the price of oil is above \$100 per barrel. If nothing else, I can guarantee you that the American people will not stand to be raped at the gas pumps much longer. There will be a countrywide boycott of gas to drive the prices down. Americans are not used to denying themselves the automobile, but at the same time when they have to make decisions about sacrificing not buying something because if they do they can't afford gas for the car.

The ONE thing that really scares the bejeezus out of me is the very distinct possibility that if this were to become a reality and construction starts, they go out of business. If you look at the history of

Al Huddleston, he has failed in one business venture after another. We could be stuck with an eyesore that will be with us for years. Remember I said that the oil industry is a boom and bust industry. There are many, many oil refineries in the United States sitting empty right now and turning into a rusted bucket of bolts because of the volatile industry that by nature is bad to start with and only gets worse.

What happens when Canada comes to its senses and realizes what an aberration the operation in Alberta has become and shuts off the valve? It is unconscionable to think that it is perfectly alright for the United States to rape and pillage the lands of Canada because of our unquenchable thirst for gasoline. Is it a wonder that people around the world have such disdain for the American glut? Do you realize that people in England today are paying almost \$8 per gallon for gas? Granted, an imperial gallon is a bit more than an American gallon, but \$8 is \$8.

It has been said in the news that if and when oil gets to \$150-\$175 per barrel, there will be a "Silent Tsunami" around the world. Famine and starvation will be rampant. Is it going to take something this drastic for people to wake up? I truly believe it is our duty to stop this runaway stupidity. Remember that this evil growth has said it will pack its bags and go home if the people of Union County vote this down on June 3. I say "Don't let the door hit you in the ass on the way out." It is our duty and obligation to start the turn around on the gluttony of oil and look to alternative fuels.

How many of you remember the rationing of gas back in the early 70's? It isn't that hard to drive 55 mph to conserve gas.

We should thank God every day for allowing us to live in peace and harmony with our land. Speaking of "our land," I would like to think this is God's land and we are merely stewards of the land. It is our job to keep it clean and wholesome as it was when we got it. I think God would like that.

Dr. Richard Currie Smith is originally from Sioux City. His family has been in this area for 6 generations and he would like to see that continue. He mentioned to me the other day that the state of South Dakota might very well develop a new theme for its state slogan, "Pollute Thy Neighbor!" He also made a very profound statement about people. The fear of loss is greater than the desire for gain. Think about that for awhile. That my friend is an awesome statement.