

**11:53 24Jun2009 RTRS-UPDATE 1-POLL-US natgas stocks seen up 99 bcf in wkly EIAs  
(Adds weather data, background, table)**

NEW YORK, June 24 (Reuters) - U.S. natural gas storage levels are expected to rise 99 billion cubic feet when weekly data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration is released early Thursday, according to a Reuters poll.

It would be the first time in six weeks that inventory builds fall short of a triple digit gain.

In the weekly survey of 21 industry traders and analysts, injection estimates for the week ended June 19 ranged from 92 bcf to 105 bcf.

Stocks rose an adjusted 85 bcf for the same week last year, while the five-year average gain for that week is 84 bcf.

The median build in the survey was also 99 bcf.

The EIA storage report will be issued on Thursday at about 10:30 a.m. EDT (1430 GMT).

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said there were 52 cooling degree days last week, 13 warmer than the previous week and one warmer than normal but five cooler than the same week in 2008.

Degree days, a measure of departure in the mean daily temperature from 65 degrees Fahrenheit (18 degrees Celsius), are used to reflect demand for energy to heat or cool homes and businesses.

In the last report, overall storage climbed 114 bcf, above the Reuters survey estimate for a 106 bcf build and well above the year-ago rise of 60 bcf and the five-year average injection for that week of 80 bcf.

Last week's EIA report showed that total domestic gas inventories climbed to 2.557 trillion cubic feet, a record high for this time of year.

Inventories now stand at 622 billion cubic feet, or 32 percent, above last year and 472 bcf, or 23 percent, above the five-year average. [ID:nPRWPI54]

Eastern stocks gained 73 bcf in the last report and edged up to 17 percent above last year's levels.

Consuming Region West storage, which rose 13 bcf for the week, slipped to 47 percent above the same year-ago week, while inventories in the Producing Region added 28 bcf and climbed to 48 percent above the same week in 2008.

A build Thursday at the Reuters estimate would widen the storage surplus to last year to about 636 bcf.

In the previous four reports, total stocks rose 450 bcf, or 113 bcf per week, versus a 333 bcf adjusted gain for the same one-month period last year and a 356 bcf five-year average build for that period.

In its last Short-Term Energy Outlook, EIA said the inventory build of 465 bcf in May was the largest increase for that month since records were first kept in 1976.

NOAA said it expected 80 cooling degree days this week, 21 above normal and 14 more than the same year-ago week.

Early injection estimates for next week's EIA report range from 65 bcf to 95 bcf versus an 86 bcf adjusted increase for the same week in 2008.

U.S. gas inventories ended the heating season at about 1.66 tcf, just below the 1.695 tcf record high from 2006 but about 22 percent above normal and a comfortable level to start the

April-through-October stock building season.

To get inventories back to a comfortable 3.4 tcf by next winter, weekly injections must average 42 bcf for the remaining 20 weeks of the stock building season, well below the five-year average of 65 bcf for that period.

If weekly storage builds through October match the five-year average pace, inventories will begin next heating season with 3.85 tcf in the ground, a new record high.

The following is a partial list of forecasters who participated in this week's survey. If forecasters provided a range, the midpoint was used.

Caprock	+97 (late entry)
CH Guernsey	+ 99
Citi Futures	+ 103
enerjay	+ 99
FC Stone	+ 105
FirstEnergy	+ 100
First Enercast	+ 98
Gelber & Assoc	+ 101
Global Insight	+ 97
Hencorp	+ 92
ICAP Energy	+ 104
Raymond James	+ 102
Ritterbusch & Assoc	+ 100
SMC Forecasting	+ 100
Stephen Smith Energy	+ 96
Strategic Energy	+ 99
Summit Energy	+ 101
Tradition Energy	+ 97

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