



Explore, enjoy, and protect the planet

TEN REASONS OFFSHORE DRILLING IS WRONG FOR VIRGINIA:

1. Drilling now would have no impact on production or prices until 2030. ⁽¹⁾ According to the Department of Energy, it would take at least a decade to bring new leases into production, and 20 years for them to reach peak production. Even then, the oil would amount to a drop in the bucket on the world market and would have a negligible effect on gas prices.



From National Geographic: Near New Orleans a small oil-slickened dog was seen wandering in Chalmette, LA, as cleanup crews recovered oil from a ruptured refinery tank on Sept. 6, 2005. Tens of thousands of barrels of oil had spilled and mixed with receding floodwater from Hurricane Katrina.

2. Drilling off Virginia's coasts would be harmful to U.S. national security. The Navy, Air Force and Department of Defense have consistently maintained their opposition to opening offshore training ranges for oil and gas development. To protect and defend our great country, they must have unfettered access to the Virginia CAPES Operating area - an area where they almost daily drop 1,000 lb. missiles and where for decades tons of live ordnance has existed.⁽²⁾ Bottomline: bombs and pipelines don't mix without an environmental nightmare occurring.

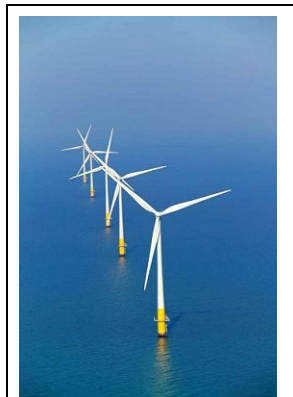
3. Drilling presents tremendous environmental risks. Virginia is prone to hurricanes and nor'easters, which pose great risk to siting any offshore drilling infrastructure here. The U.S. Coast Guard reported that during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita roughly 9 million gallons of oil were spilled.⁽³⁾ Compare that amount with the 11 million gallons of oil spilled by the infamous Exxon Valdez. The U.S. Mineral Management Services reported that 113 platforms were destroyed and 457 pipelines were damaged.⁽⁴⁾

The onshore network of pipelines, refineries, roads, and storage tanks needed to support drilling destroys thousands of acres of vital wetlands that otherwise protect our coasts from storms. Drilling in the Gulf of Mexico have destroyed more wetlands than exist between New Jersey and Maine.⁽⁵⁾

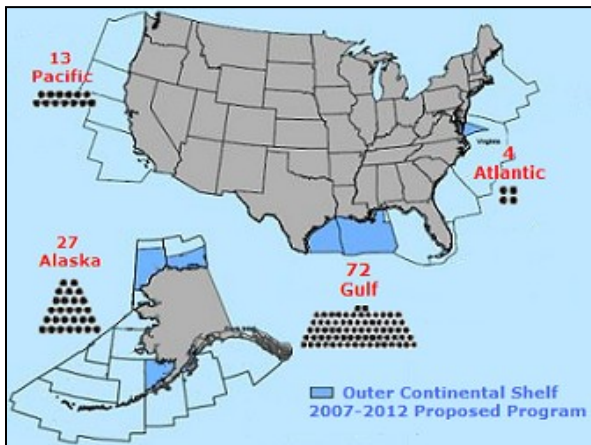
Normal drilling operations also reek havoc on the environment. With every well drilled, 180,000 gallons of waste mud containing toxic metals such as mercury and lead are dumped into the ocean. Platforms also dump thousands of gallons of toxic "produced" water every day.

4. Drilling upstages Virginia's development of clean energy solutions. Imagine the same investment instead being dedicated to offshore wind, the world's fastest growing energy source. A wind farm with a footprint the size of Virginia Beach could supply 20% of Virginia's electricity needs.⁽⁵⁾ Researchers also indicate that 160,000 turbines could power the entire East Coast, which for Hampton Roads could present a two-pher. For not only is wind a clean source of energy, it could also launch a major new industry tailor-made for Norfolk/Newport News shipbuilding industry.

5. "This is one emergency we can't drill our way out of" says oil tycoon T. Boone Pickens. The U.S. uses 25% of the world's energy, yet only has 3% of the world's reserves.⁽⁶⁾ We could drill everywhere in the U.S. and maybe bump that up to 3.1%. Drilling will NOT solve the problem or end our dangerous addiction to fossil fuels that contribute to our global warming, greenhouse gas emissions.



50,000 lucky Delmarva Power customers will soon get their power from offshore wind. They'll pay \$5/mo more, a difference that will soon evaporate given predicted gas price increases.



Source: Dept. of Interior, Mineral Management Services, two maps combined

6. Drilling only benefits Big Oil's bottom line. For 25 years, Congress and successive presidents have recognized the value of America's coasts and have continued to ban new drilling off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Now, in the waning days of the Bush administration, Big Oil is making a last-chance land grab, and using Virginia to pry loose the moratorium. Virginia is targeted for offshore drilling because it is viewed as the "weakest link" on the East Coast—the state most likely to cave in to industry lobbying and enable the eventual lifting of the moratorium off the entire Atlantic coast. Big Oil views Virginia as a "loss leader" to get to the reserves off other states.

7. We do not need to open new areas for drilling. Four times more natural gas is available in areas already open to drilling than in waters protected by the moratorium, and the industry is using only a fraction (18%) of what it already has access to. These unused areas could produce an additional 4.8 million barrels of oil and 44.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas each day, nearly double current domestic oil production.⁽⁷⁾ Bottomline: There are appropriate places to drill, but Virginia is an inappropriate place to drill given the enormous risks for so little return decades yet to come.

8. There is no leasing scenario or regulatory framework that would allow development of natural gas and not simultaneously promote the development of offshore oil. Historically, there have been no instances where industry has not removed both gas and oil before capping a productive well.

9. The infrastructure supporting offshore drilling is ugly, smelly and spewing pollutants. The heavy industrial infrastructure needed to support any offshore drilling must be located nearby offshore drilling rigs. As a result, our beaches and coastal zones will be cluttered with miles of pipelines, refineries, smokestacks, terminals, tankers, storage facilities, ports, helipads and dorms - hardly the attractive infrastructure greeting tourists to Hampton Roads, where they spent over \$890 million last year alone.⁽⁸⁾

10. Virginia needs to accept responsibility for its global warming pollution generated. Drilling off our coast only prolongs and expands our dependence on fossil fuels increasing global warming pollution and sea level rise. With sea level rise projected at as much as a meter or more over the next century and the significant costs associated with addressing expected flooding and inundation of our low lying coastal areas, Virginia needs to explore how we will meet our energy needs while decreasing our reliance on fossil fuels.

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