

the state

# Weather major factor in progress of oil slick

United Press International

CORPUS CHRISTI — Scientists monitoring progress of an oil slick creeping north from a well blowout in the Gulf of Mexico predicted Tuesday the leading edge would hit Brownsville, Texas in 10 days.

Dr. Jerry Galt of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration told a news conference, however, the scientists needed more information on currents before they could predict whether the oil might wash ashore along Padre Island, a sandy beach running 100 miles from Corpus Christi to Brownsville.

Louise Carroll of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says information gathered in the past week by a Coast Guard cutter and a specially equipped C-130 aircraft has been fed into a computer and a projection should be announced today on the path and speed of the oil slick.

The new projection will be used by federal and state agencies assembled at Corpus Christi to help keep the oil from fouling shrimp grounds and resort beaches along the Texas coast should the 300-mile long, 25-mile wide slick continue northward.

"The projection they will make will be based on the assumption nothing goofy happens weatherwise," Carroll said. "The weather is a real wacky factor in this."

Carroll confirmed NOAA had heard reports from Mexican newspapers that patches of oil had washed ashore along 24 miles of the coast in Mexico's Veracruz State from Tuxpan south to Cao Rojo, but said U.S. officials could not confirm it.

"We heard reports mostly from the media," she said. "We don't really have any way of confirming it. We haven't been flying within 12 miles of the coast because it would violate Mexico's air space. One scientist said he would not be surprised if there wasn't some oil on Mexican beaches."

The newspaper "El Sol" in Tampico, Mexico, where 1,500 families earn their livelihood by fishing, described the situation as a major disaster and dubbed the oil slick La Marina Negra — "the black shores."

The original July 26 projection for the slick to reach Texas was based on normal currents and winds, which Hurricane Bob changed, and Carroll said it was "too early to tell" whether Claudette, the latest tropical storm in the Gulf of Mexico, might also affect its movement.

Officials in Mexico, who say up to half the 30,000 barrels of oil was being burned at the Ixtoc I wellhead, 50 miles off Ciudad Del Carmen on the Yucatan Peninsula, and 2 percent was being captured at sea, have said it may be the end of August before the gushing well can be capped.

## Rosalynn says 'I blew it'

# First lady criticizes GOP

United Press International

DALLAS — First lady Rosalynn Carter, indulging in political rhetoric she often avoids, blamed Republicans for the energy crisis and hailed her husband's leadership during a two-day Texas visit that ended Tuesday. Mrs. Carter spent much of Tuesday in seclusion at a 30-acre religious retreat owned by Ruth Carter Stapleton, the president's sister, in Argyle, Texas.

Her schedule called for a flight to California for political appearances in Fresno, Palo Alto and Los Angeles before returning to Washington tonight.

"We've had Republicans in the White House eight years, and how did we get ourselves into such a mess," she asked at a fund-raising dinner Monday night for the Carter-Mondale Presidential Committee.

"How did we get so dependent on foreign oil," she asked, pointing to past GOP occupants of the White House.

Carter, who routinely defends her husband and his policies, previously has avoided direct political attacks on the Republicans.

Her rhetoric at the dinner, however, was carefully prepared. Several hours earlier when reporters asked her about GOP criticisms, she basically shrugged it off.

At the dinner, the first lady opened her speech by mentioning the news conference question.

"I blew it," she said of her answer.

It was the first time in her four-state trip that began Sunday in which she criticized Republicans. She made earlier stops at Chicago, Pine Bluff, Ark., and Little Rock, Ark.

The first lady's expanding influence in the wake of the "domestic summit" at Camp David has become highly visible.

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# Federal oil royalties increase

United Press International

DENVER — Federal royalties on offshore oil and gas production in Texas topped the \$50 million mark in 1978, nearly five times the previous record high two years ago, the U.S. Geological Survey reports.

The increase resulted from a 168 percent increase in gas production off the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and a doubling of gas prices, officials at the USGS regional office in Denver said Monday.

Gas production accounted for nearly 93 percent of last year's Texas

total OCS royalties of \$51.8 million — an 387 percent increase over the \$10.6 million collected two years ago.

The USGS supervises OCS oil, gas and mineral exploration, development and production, and collects the federal royalties.

Production of gas on OCS leases off the Texas coast jumped from 87 trillion cubic feet in 1977 to 233 trillion cubic feet last year, according to USGS officials. Meanwhile, the average price of each thousand cubic feet of natural gas produced on the

leases increased from 60 cents two years ago to \$1.23 in 1978.

The higher production and prices pushed the value of the gas produced on federal lands from \$52 million in 1977 to \$287 million last year, officials said.

The hike was due mainly to an increase in oil production to 941,669 barrels and because the average price of a barrel of oil produced on the federal leases jumped from \$9.81 in 1977 to \$10.33 last year.

The USGS said condensate royalties totaled \$2.27 million, an 87 percent increase, while royalties from production of gasoline and liquefied petroleum gas in conjunction with natural gas production totaled \$105,315 a drop of 75 percent.

Federal royalties from onshore Texas production of gas, oil and other petroleum products in 1978 added another \$255,511 to the federal royalty income, an 11.7 percent decline from 1977. Half of the onshore royalties are returned to Texas state government.

All OCS production royalties go to the U.S. Treasury's general fund, and portions are available for allocation to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and to the Historic Preservation Fund.

The 1978 royalty collection of \$52 million from both onshore and offshore production last year constituted 3.5 percent of the record-high \$1.5 billion in royalties collected nationwide from oil, gas, coal and

other mineral production on federal and Indian lands. Louisiana accounted for most of the national total, with OSC production topping the \$1 billion mark for the first time.

# Fuel allocations running short

United Press International

HOUSTON — With July allocations running out, 7 percent of the state's service stations are out of at least one grade of gasoline and more are limiting purchases, the American Automobile Association reported Tuesday in its survey of 420 gas stations.

But the AAA reported stations along interstate highways in small towns and rural areas still have good fuel supplies and travelers should have few problems finding gas, except at night in large cities.

This week's survey found availability was in slight decline overall in that fewer stations were open at night and more — 8 percent — were limiting purchases.

Station operators who have decreased their nighttime hours said they were open longer during the day or were reserving gasoline for Saturday and Sunday.

Still, 23 percent of the stations were open after 8 p.m. weeknights and 39 percent were open past 6 p.m. Saturdays. Austin, Corpus Christi and Houston stations reported increased Sunday openings.

Prices again increased, rising nearly 2 cents per gallon since last week. Current average full serve

prices (with last week's prices in parentheses) were: regular 87.9 cents per gallon (86.2), unleaded 91.8 (89.9), premium 92.4 (91.7). Self-serve prices included regular 85.5 (83.9), unleaded 89.3 (87.6) and premium 91.4 (88.9).

Diesel fuel rose to 90.8 cents per gallon from last week's 89.7.

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