

CONSENT CALENDAR  
December 11, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Dona Spring

Subject: Schedule Presentation from Independent Oil Berkeley

RECOMMENDATION:

Allow a brief presentation at the December 18, 2007 Council meeting from Independent Oil Berkeley, a grassroots citizen activist group planning the transition to fossil fuel free era in Berkeley.

BACKGROUND:

This citizen group is concerned about their family, neighbors and community members survival as what is referred to as "Peak Oil" progresses. Our future will dramatically change as oil becomes more expensive and harder to come by. What should citizens expect and what can they do now to plan and prepare for this certainty in our future. Please see attached document for Peak Oil facts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

CONTACT PERSON:

Councilmember Dona Spring 981-7140

Attachments

1: Peak Oil and Gas Fact Sheet

## Peak Oil & Gas Fact Sheet (2007)

- ▶ California uses 88 billion gallons of diesel a year and massive quantities of natural gas in order to pump water.
- ▶ Natural gas provides 42% of California's power.
- ▶ Geologists predict that global oil production will peak in the next few years, after which supply will drop off steeply. Some industry insiders believe it has already peaked.
- ▶ Energy experts predict natural gas will peak sometime between 2018 and 2030.
- ▶ It takes about 350 gallons of oil a year to feed the average American. (This includes oil used in pesticides, farm machinery and to transport food to processing plants and supermarkets). Conventional farmers also use tons of pounds of nitrogen fertilizer which is manufactured with natural gas.
- ▶ When Cuba lost access to Soviet oil in the 1990s, the average Cuban lost 20 pounds due to severe food shortages. (Strict food rationing prevented outright starvation).
- ▶ Oil is used in the production of many pharmaceuticals and medical/dental supplies, asphalt, all petrochemicals and plastics, and most clothing and footwear, computers, toys, bottles, and other common household goods and office supplies.
- ▶ 7.7 million American homes are heated with oil. More than half are heated with natural gas.
- ▶ There exist no liquid fuel alternatives that can meet more than a fraction of our current needs. (If *all* US cropland were put into ethanol production, it would provide only *half* of our liquid fuel needs).
- ▶ U.S. Department of Energy consultants warned the federal government in 2005 to start a "crash" mobilization to retool our economy for oil independence. The government has done nothing in response.
- ▶ Around the world, citizens are prompting their local governments to prepare for peak oil by taking steps to "relocalize" their economies and ensure their ability to function with limited supplies of oil and gas.

[www.relocalize.net/groups/oilindependentberkeley](http://www.relocalize.net/groups/oilindependentberkeley)

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