



U.S. Oil Company Ownership, 2007

## Do you own an oil company?

If you've ever wondered who owns America's oil and natural gas companies, chances are the answer is, "you do."

Surprised?

The fact is that if you have a mutual fund account – and 55 million American households, with a medium income of under \$70,000, do – there's a good chance it invests in oil and natural gas company stocks. If you have an IRA or personal retirement account – and 45 million U.S. households do – there is a good chance it invests in energy stocks.

All this comes from a recent study\* of U.S. oil and natural gas company ownership headed by Robert J. Shapiro, undersecretary of commerce for economic affairs under President Bill Clinton.

According to the study, the majority of the industry's shareholders are "middle-class U.S. households with mutual fund investments, pension accounts, other personal retirement accounts, and small personal portfolios."

What many may find particularly surprising is that corporate insiders own only a tiny fraction of company shares.

Specifically, here is what the study found:

- 29.5 percent of U.S. oil and natural gas

company shares are owned by mutual funds and other firms

- 27 percent are owned by pension funds
- Individual investors own 23 percent
- 14 percent are held in IRA accounts
- 5 percent are owned by other institutional investors
- 1.5 percent are held by corporate management

These findings tell us something very important: tens of millions of Americans have a stake in the U.S. oil and natural gas industry. When the industry's earnings are strong, the real winners are middle-class Americans, people investing in their retirement security or saving for their children's college education.

So when the political rhetoric gets hot about increasing energy taxes or taking "excess profits" from U.S. oil companies, it is important to step back, look at the facts, and ask yourself, "who does that really hurt?"

To read the full study, visit [EnergyTomorrow.org](http://EnergyTomorrow.org).

THE *people* OF AMERICA'S OIL AND NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY

**Tens of millions of Americans own a piece of the U.S. oil and natural gas industry**

\*The Distribution of Ownership of U.S. Oil and Natural Gas Companies, SONECON, September 2007