

## Kuwait Stops Exporting Crude to the U.S.

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*Kuwait has not sent any crude oil to the United States for at least four weeks, [EIA's weekly petroleum reports](#) for the last four weeks, which also include a weekly comparison, have revealed.*

The last week that saw Kuwaiti crude coming into the United States was August 24th, when [49,000 bpd](#) were received at U.S. ports. This compares with 214,000 bpd a year earlier, suggesting that Kuwait is reorienting itself to the more lucrative Asian markets, [Bloomberg reports](#), having calculated that Kuwaiti crude costs an average of US\$80 a barrel in Asia, which is a dollar more than it costs in the United States.

Kuwaiti oil is predominantly high-sulfur, which is what a lot of Asian refineries prefer to process and are willing to pay more for it, a source in the know told Bloomberg, asking to not be identified.

So far so good for Kuwait, which is a relatively small producer, but the emirate is facing a production cap, Bloomberg notes, because of an ongoing dispute with ally Saudi Arabia about the fields that they share in the so-called neutral zone. On Sunday, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed went on a visit to Kuwait to discuss the topic in light of growing pressure on Middle Eastern producers to ramp up production to offset a loss of supply caused by the U.S. sanctions against Iran.

Joint oil production in the neutral zone was suspended in 2015, but earlier this month the Financial Times [reported](#) that the two countries were mulling over a restart amid rising oil prices and the matching rise in worry among large oil buyers.

The neutral zone, the FT reported at the time, could be pumping half a million barrels daily in a few months, according to the International Energy Agency, which would add to more than 10 million bpd of Saudi production and almost 3 million bpd on Kuwaiti production based on the latest figures for July.

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