

China First-Half Gas Demand Rises 22% as Output Grows (Update1)
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(Adds gas output by energy companies in second paragraph.)

By Bloomberg News

July 26 (Bloomberg) -- China, the world's biggest energy user, consumed 22 percent more natural gas in the first half compared with a year earlier as the country boosts production and use of the cleaner-burning fuel to cut emissions.

Demand rose after China Petrochemical Corp.'s first-half gas output jumped more than 40 percent, China National Offshore Oil Corp.'s climbed more than 30 percent and China National Petroleum Corp. showed "stable growth," the National Development and Reform Commission said in a statement on its website today. It didn't specify how much gas China consumed.

China, the world's biggest polluter, wants state-owned energy companies to boost domestic gas production and import more to help meet emissions goals. Gas imports, including 1.7 billion cubic meters piped from Central Asia and 4.08 million metric tons of liquefied natural gas, rose 1.6 times in the first six months compared with a year earlier, the top economic planner said.

China may still "face pressure" in various regions during the peak winter demand season because of bottlenecks in pipelines, insufficient stockpile capacity and the unwillingness of gas-importing companies to bring in costlier supplies from overseas, NDRC said.

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