

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

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FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT

Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported) May 14, 2004

Berry Petroleum Company  
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware (State or other jurisdiction of incorporation)	1-9735 (Commission File Number)	77-0079387 IRS Employer Identification No.
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5201 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 300 Bakersfield, CA 93309  
(Address of principal executive offices)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code (661) 616-3900

N/A  
(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

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Item 9. Regulation FD Disclosure

(c) Exhibits

The following Exhibits are hereby filed as part of this Current Report on Form 8-K:

Exhibit 99 - Press Release dated May 14, 2004 regarding the Registrant's announcing the designation of interim governance procedures and the formation of a search committee for a permanent president and chief executive officer.

SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

BERRY PETROLEUM COMPANY

By /s/ Kenneth A. Olson  
Name: Kenneth A. Olson  
Title: Corporate Secretary  
and Treasurer

May 14, 2004



News Release

Berry Petroleum Company  
5201 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 300  
Bakersfield, California 93309-0640

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Contacts:

Robert F. Heinemann, Chairman, Interim President and Interim CEO  
Ralph J. Goehring, Senior Vice President and CFO

BERRY PETROLEUM COMPANY DESIGNATES INTERIM GOVERNANCE  
PROCEDURES AND NAMES SEARCH COMMITTEE

BAKERSFIELD, CA - May 14, 2004 - Berry Petroleum Company (NYSE:BRY) announced that the board of directors has formed a Search Committee to direct the process leading to the naming of a permanent president and chief executive officer. The Search Committee consists of Mr. Martin H. Young, Chairman, Mr. Ralph B. Busch, III, and Mr. John A. Hagg.

During this period, while Mr. Robert Heinemann serves as interim president and chief executive officer as well as chairman of the board, the executive sessions of the board will be chaired in his absence on a rotating basis by the respective Chairmen of the Audit Committee, Mr. Martin H. Young; the Corporate Governance and Nominating Committee, Mr. J. Herbert Gaul; and the Compensation Committee, Mr. Thomas J. Jamieson. Further, during this period, Mr. Heinemann will not be deemed an ex-officio member of any of the board committees. Although persons designated as ex-officio members neither have a right to attend meetings, nor to vote, nevertheless the ex-officio designation of the chairman of the board as to the committees is suspended and all members of the board committees are independent.

Mr. Heinemann stated, "The board is proceeding expeditiously in the search and while a specific timetable can not be predicted, the board's goal is to complete the process over the next three to four months. In the meantime, the board is very appreciative of all of the efforts of the Berry employees, particularly the management team, as we continue to enjoy outstanding operating and financial results."

Berry Petroleum Company is a publicly traded independent oil and gas production and exploitation company with its headquarters in Bakersfield, California.

This release may contain descriptions of the Company's expectations regarding future business activities. These forward-looking statements are made in reliance upon safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Accordingly, actual results may differ materially from those contemplated by the forward-looking statements.

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