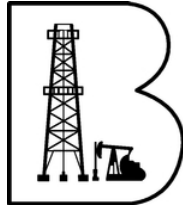

**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**
Washington, D.C. 20549

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 17, 2012



BERRY PETROLEUM COMPANY
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware

(State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation or
Organization)

1-9735

(Commission File Number)

77-0079387

(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

1999 Broadway, Suite 3700, Denver, Colorado 80202
(Address of Principal Executive Offices, Including Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: **(303) 999-4400**

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
 - Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))
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ITEM 8.01 OTHER EVENTS.

On May 17, 2012, Berry Petroleum Company (“Company”) announced the appointment of John R. Matson, 57, as an officer of the Company effective May 17, 2012. As Vice President of Texas Production, Mr. Matson will have responsibility for the Company's producing operations in the Permian Basin and East Texas, and will report directly to Mr. Michael Duginski, the Company's Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

SIGNATURES

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 hereunto duly authorized.

BERRY PETROLEUM COMPANY

By: /s/ Davis O O'Connor

Davis O O'Connor

Corporate Secretary

Date: May 21, 2012