

HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO
Form 8-K
January 21, 2005

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):

January 20, 2005

The Houston Exploration Company

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware

001-11899

22-2674487

(State or other jurisdiction
of incorporation)

(Commission
File Number)

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

1100 Louisiana Street, Suite 2000, Houston,
Texas

77002-5215

(Address of principal executive offices)

(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code:

713-830-6800

Not Applicable

Former name or former address, if changed since last report

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))

Top of the Form

Item 2.02. Results of Operations and Financial Condition.

On January 20, 2005, The Houston Exploration Company ("Houston Exploration") issued a press release to offer a preview of its financial and operational results for the year ended December 31, 2004 and to announce the date of its earnings release for the fourth quarter and year ended December 31, 2004. The press release is furnished as Exhibit 99.1 to this Current Report and incorporated by reference herein.

The information in this report, including Exhibit 99.1, shall not be deemed "filed" for the purposes of Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Item 7.01. Regulation FD Disclosure.

Houston Exploration incorporates by reference into this Item 7.01 the information in its press release, dated January 20, 2005, a copy of which is furnished as Exhibit 99.1 to this Current Report.

The information in this report, including Exhibit 99.1, shall not be deemed "filed" for the purposes of Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(c) Exhibits

99.1 Press release issued by Houston Exploration on January 20, 2005 offering a preview of 2004 financial results and announcing earnings release date for fourth quarter and full-year 2004 results.

Top of the Form

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.

The Houston Exploration Company

January 20, 2005

By: */s/ James F. Westmoreland*

Name: James F. Westmoreland

Title: Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer

Top of the Form

Exhibit Index

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
99.1	Press release issued by Houston Exploration dated January 20, 2005.