The first hole in the ground whether it is lateral or not. Due to the methodology used, further develop already discovered crude oil or natural gas resources. Other drilling activities, such as drilling an old well deeper, drilling of laterals from the original well, drilling of service and injection wells, and drilling for resources other than crude oil or natural gas are excluded.

Beginning in 1973, this well count includes only the original drilling of a hole intended to discover or further develop already discovered crude oil or natural gas resources. Drilling activities, such as drilling an old well deeper, drilling of laterals from the original well, drilling of service and injection wells, and drilling for resources other than crude oil or natural gas are excluded. Beginning in 1990, a new well is defined as a well in which there is a new well record of well completions for all available annual data beginning in 1949 and monthly data thereafter.

Notes:
- Data are estimates.
- For 1960–1969, data are for well completion reports received by the American Petroleum Institute during the reporting year; for all other years, data are for well completions in a given year. Through 1969, some well counts include only the original drilling of a hole intended to discover or further develop already discovered crude oil or natural gas resources. Beginning in 1973, this well count includes only the original drilling of a hole intended to discover or further develop already discovered crude oil or natural gas resources. Drilling activities, such as drilling an old well deeper, drilling of laterals from the original well, drilling of service and injection wells, and drilling for resources other than crude oil or natural gas are excluded.
- Beginning in 1990, a new well is defined as a well in which there is a new well record of well completions for all available annual data beginning in 1949 and monthly data thereafter.

Sources: