

Above normal temperature forecast to keep gas prices under pressure

DAILY ANALYSIS REPORT

Wednesday, December 15, 2021



ABOVE NORMAL TEMPERATURE FORECAST TO KEEP GAS PRICES UNDER PRESSURE

- Natural gas prices are slightly higher than yesterday's low of \$3.686, trading near \$3.802. However, a change in the weather forecast is expected to maintain the bearish trend for the time being. Outlook for above-average U.S. temperatures over the medium term is likely to keep gas prices under pressure which will reduce heating demand during winter season. Data agency Maxar projects that December would likely be the third warmest going back to 1950 based on natural gas consumption.
- Natural gas prices are likely to remain under pressure due a drop in domestic and foreign demand. A drop in electricity production is also likely to keep gas prices under pressure. As per Bloomberg data, US domestic demand for natural gas on Tuesday was 82.5 bcf, down -16% y/y. Also, Gas flows to U.S. LNG export terminals on Tuesday was 10.7 bcf, down -4.1% w/w. Additionally, The Edison Electric Institute reported last Wednesday that total U.S. electricity output in the week ended Dec 4 fell -2.9% y/y to 73,744 GWh (gigawatt hours).
- However gas prices are likely to find some support from US production data. As per Bloomberg data, US production on Tuesday at 89.3 bcf, down -1.7% y/y and the lowest in 10-1/2 months.
- Last Friday, Baker Hughes announced that the number of active US natural gas drilling rigs increased by 3 rigs in the week ending December 10 to a 1-1/2-year high of 105 rigs. The number of natural gas rigs is far higher than the record low of 68 rigs set in July 2020.
- The net short of natural gas futures fell by 235 contracts to 132 443 contracts during the week, according to the CFTC Commitments of Traders data for the week ended December 7. The number of speculative longs fell by 13552 contracts, while the number of speculative shorts fell by 13787 contracts.
- On the US inventory front, according to the EIA, natural gas inventories declined -59 billion cubic feet to 3,505 billion cubic feet in the week ending December 3, above estimates of -55 billion cubic feet. Natural gas supplies are still limited, with stockpiles down -8.9% year on year and 2.5 percent below their five-year average.

Outlook

■ Natural gas prices are likely to trade lower while below the \$3.91-\$3.984 barrier line. Immediate support may be seen in the range of \$3.676-\$3.522.

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