

The [American Supply Association \(ASA\)](#) and its [Industrial Piping Division \(IPD\)](#) is the national organization serving wholesaler-distributors and their suppliers in the industrial and mechanical pipe-valve-fitting industry. As a powerful alliance of channel partners, we provide a forum for your upstream trading partners to exchange critical information and address key issues.

In particular, ASA's IPD members constantly check the pulse of the materials and commodities they proudly supply to you. ASA's IPD members are knowledgeable industry leaders, and those who volunteer their service on the IPD Executive Council compile and prepare the *IPD Commodity Reports*. The *Reports* contain some of the most current and qualified market data and information available from the industry's leading manufacturers and distributors about emerging trends and other price-influencing actions and events.

This information is an example of how ASA's IPD manufacturer and distributor [members](#) are constantly looking ahead to ensure you have information and resources you need to be successful. Learn more at [www.asa.net](http://www.asa.net).

## Oil and Fuel Outlook

With the tax bill and a number of trade deals in hand, petroleum markets are settling down to work through the last 5 months of the year. Most petroleum products experienced some mild price increases over the past month, but not to a degree that would register on most people's radar. Some of this is due to normal seasonal increases as the summer travel season peaks. Looking through the end of the year, the US will work on refilling the Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) and some of the trade deals will potentially boost energy exports from the US to trading partners, helping to underpin prices.

West Texas Intermediate (WTI) was higher month-over-month at the time of writing. Oil was trading at \$69.19 (\$65.38 a barrel in last month's report), which is almost unchanged year-to-date. It was 2.69% lower vs. this time last year (11.86% lower than last month). Brent North Sea Crude was also higher at \$72.51 (\$68.12 a

barrel last month). This was also essentially unchanged YTD and was 4.02% lower over the past 12 months.

Fuel prices were mixed this month. Diesel prices were essentially unchanged at \$3.73 a gallon at the time of writing (\$3.72 a gallon in the last briefing) (Source: AAA) and were just \$.06 per gallon lower than last year. But gasoline was lower at \$3.14 a gallon (\$3.23 per gallon in last month's briefing), which is 36 cents per gallon lower than last year.

Crude oil prices were adjusted upward again in the latest short term forecast issued by the EIA. Prices are expected to average \$65.22 in 2025 (\$62.33 in the last update). For 2026, the EIA has oil prices down sharply to \$54.82 a barrel. Prices are expected to average \$64.69 in Q3, \$60.02 in Q4 and \$56.00 in Q1 of next year. Prices will go through significant volatility until trade wars and geopolitical tensions stabilize.

Gasoline prices were unchanged once again in the latest July forecast and are expected to average \$3.09 in 2025 (versus \$3.31 average in 2024). They are expected to stay low at \$3.04 in 2026. Prices will average \$3.11 in Q3, \$2.99 in Q4, and \$2.93 in Q1 of 2026. Diesel prices as reported by the EIA currently show them slightly higher at \$3.61 (\$3.52 in the last update) through 2025 (after averaging \$3.76 in 2024). Prices are expected to average \$3.67 in Q3, \$3.59 in Q4, and \$3.59 in Q1 of 2026.

The EIA expects daily crude oil production to be slightly lower at 13.37 million barrels per day in 2025 (13.42 in the last update) and unchanged at 13.37 mbpd in 2026 (also 13.37 in the last update). Total commercial inventories (all types of crude oil and fuels) are expected to remain on average 1.204 billion barrels in 2025 (1.229 billion in 2024). They will fall further (largely due to higher export volumes and refilling the Strategic Oil Reserves) to an average of 1.185 billion barrels in 2026.

## **What ASA PVF Distributors Are Saying**

*Feedback from ASA member wholesalers doing business in the industrial and mechanical PVF space.*

- “The past three months have performed extremely well, achieving the highest revenue levels in the history of our company. While price increases have assisted with this performance, overall market demand across most segments has been the leading driver. Much of this momentum has carried into Q3 but we are starting to hear about waning order logs from some of our key vendor partners that could bring some concern as to how the year finishes out.”
- “July started off like a rocket...it has cooled towards the end of the month. In the Northeast, we are all dealing with shifting loyalties based on a major pipe supplier being bought by a national and then a lot of their staff leaving. It has added to bookings but also has caused some instability in the market. The push on the Comex is driving all of our costs up, but unfortunately it has not reflected in higher selling prices in the market.”
- “We are optimistic about the next two quarters. Our multi-family has a bunch of buildings starting construction and our new home plumbers are telling us they have work through the first quarter of next year.”
- “Our sales are currently up significantly from last year; this is largely due to data center work for us.”
- “Our current major threat is tariffs. We are expecting sales to decrease because we are being forced to increase prices or offer less services.”
- “Industrial still down and lagging behind last year. Municipal sales are way up. Mostly driven by projects. Chemical industry is way down with no spending.”
- “Our commodity sales are up significantly — not just in total dollars, but also in units sold. With commodity prices rising across the board recently, and particularly with copper over the last 30 days, it's expected that top-line sales would increase even with the same or fewer units. That said, I believe we're seeing a combination of panic buying in anticipation of further price increases, along with strategic purchasing from savvy contractors. The more strategic buyers are securing material up front, understanding that if their bids are profitable, the initial cost becomes less relevant. This can give them a competitive edge over others quoting at newer, higher market prices.
- “As a distributor, we walk a fine line between pricing based on cost-averaged inventory and adjusting prices to reflect replacement costs. Our approach can vary by product line. For example, our strategy for copper tubing may differ from how we handle steel pipe. More than ever, staying closely connected to our inventory value and current market costs is critical.”
- “Our sales have been strong throughout the year and continue to grow. As a relatively new player in our market, we're consistently gaining share while also partnering with some large, fastest-growing customers. Primary sources of our business this year have been capital projects in property management, warehouse and data center construction, and work in schools and hospitals.”

- “We have a strong futures pipeline, with data centers being our strongest project work right now. Day to day, medium-sized jobs are few and far between but the large projects continue to hit and we don't see any slowing down on that front through Q3.”

#### **From a PVF Supplier**

- Project work continues to drive business
- Data Centers
- Hospital expansion/re-model
- Continued uptick in request for NSF-61 and NSF-372 for stainless products
- Before it was just accepted, now people are requesting it
- In our industry, waterworks, we rely heavily on public bids, a lot of these are government funded whether city or federal. These are projects that are out there on sites like Quest that multiple contractors will bid on and as a wholesaler we will quote those contractors.
- This year, beginning in June, the number of public jobs posted has decreased significantly.
- For example: month of May – 18 public bids, month of June 9 public bids.
- Our expectation was that maybe after the 4th of July it'd pick back up again but it hasn't. There are only 7 this month.
- We're not sure why this is exactly, there's a lot of consideration such as tariffs and the overall political climate, but no one knows for sure why things have decreased like they have.
- Waterworks/underground is up. Good to see for infrastructure coming. Resi plumbing is soft. Commercial jobs are looking good now and into the future.

#### **From a PVF Distributor**

**Location:** New England and New York

##### **Sales**

July is no longer plant shutdown month, it's vacation month!! So we made our salesforce aware of that and have them following up on all of their significant open quotes with the hope of closing them, and it's working!!!

##### **Jobs**

Significant uptick in power project activity.

##### **PVF-related positives**

Tariff increases are understood and not being challenged.

##### **Forecasting**

Looking to finish 2025 up 5% in sales and GP and we're on plan to do just that.

#### **From a PVF Distributor**

**Location:** Northeast

##### **Sales**

Sales are up through the first 6 months of the year. Average +19%. Sales are good, slightly better than okay, but it's the increases in the costs of material that is really driving the dollar growth. Parts and pieces are also up, but not as drastic as the dollar.

##### **Projects**

Projects remain the same as last month, and they range from data centers to university and hospital expansions for specialty studies or manufacturing. Our market has a wealth of these end users, and we have seen constant changes enhancing services and products since COVID.

### **PVF-related positives**

Demand isn't exceptional but demand is constant in our areas of expertise. We understand from our market and customers that the demand will remain good but not great through 2025. We always stop guessing after 30, 60, and 90 day intervals based on the global uncertainty.

### **PVF-related concerns**

The most difficult part of this year has been pricing. This start and stop of tariffs and international trade has challenged supply and made pricing structures difficult to maintain. We adapt, but projects needing protection have been more difficult to work on. The elephant in the room currently is the copper tariffs, and will they actually go into effect on August 1, 2025, or if an extension will be granted and prolonging the fear cycle.

### **Forecasting**

As mentioned above, tariffs starting and stopping, on again then off again will determine how aggressive or passive we become with our customers. We see the demand as good not great, and we see demand continuing awaiting the next change. Projects have to be completed, and new areas of expertise for hospital and universities must continue to keep up with overall competitiveness.

### **Cast-Iron**

There have been no price or market change announcements from McWane (Tyler Pipe) and/or Charlotte Pipe and Foundry for Cast Iron pipe and fittings for the month of July, 2025.

### **Copper**

Copper prices surged to a record intraday high of \$5.8955 per pound on July 8, following President Trump's unexpected announcement of a 50% tariff on copper imports. The move sent futures soaring more than 13%, marking the steepest single-day gain in the market since 1968.

The tariff, set to take effect on Aug. 1, has triggered a scramble across global supply chains. The premium between copper traded on the New York-based COMEX and the London Metal Exchange widened to an unprecedented 25%, as traders and manufacturers rushed to secure inventory ahead of the deadline. Shipping data indicates that bulk carriers from East Asia and Chile — two of the world's largest copper exporters — are being diverted to expedite deliveries to the US.

Producers responded swiftly. A new list price sheet for copper tube was released within days of the announcement, accompanied by a hike in multipliers. Market participants are now awaiting further guidance from Washington on which products and countries will fall within the scope of the new duties.

Copper futures are up 10.1% M/M and 31.2% year-to-date. The September COMEX contract was last trading at \$5.634/lb.

### **Stainless Steel**

The stainless steel pipe and fittings markets are waiting for the tariffs to stabilize and be signed.

Industrial markets overall have been hesitant to make larger decisions with global materials because of the uncertainty of major trade deals. As of yesterday, the EU, Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and the UK have come to terms with the administration on tariffs and investments. The other countries should start to fall in line with similar terms. We expect the market will react fairly quickly, once the deals are signed and official. China is at the table as well, which is the biggest hurdle for the U.S. in disparity of trade. Fingers crossed that by the end of the year, we will have certainty and the markets can move forward with projects, especially those benefiting our energy, and chemical sectors where PVF spending will grow.

## **Carbon Steel**

Both carbon steel pipe and the hot-rolled coil that is used to create this pipe's prices have fallen ever-so-slightly over the last month. As of this writing, HRC is trading about 1.6% down from where it was last month.

Steel producers had indicated that they would be raising prices on domestic steel as a result of the White House's tariff actions, however the market has not supported those increases.

There is a general sentiment on Wall Street that steel production and the jobs that go along with it will be re-shored.

## **Carbon Steel Flange**

Delivery times for import carbon steel flanges have continued to increase. In August 2023, the avg. days to import a container of flanges was roughly 120 days. It has been steadily increasing in avg days to import a container of flanges. At the end of June 2025, the average days to import a container of carbon steel flanges was 175 days. Also, the average cost to ship the container in the same timeframe has increased from about \$4,000 to about \$6,500. Tariff charges have also added anywhere from 25% to 50% depending on when the material cleared customs.