Murphy Oil Provides Fourth Quarter Earnings Guidance

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EL DORADO, Ark.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 30, 2003--Murphy Oil Corporation (NYSE:MUR) expects income before special items for the fourth quarter of 2003 to be between $.55 and $.60 per diluted share.

Production during the quarter is estimated to average 124,000 barrels of oil equivalent (BOE) per day. Expected average crude oil and natural gas sales volumes for the quarter should be 127,000 BOE per day. Dry hole charges for the quarter should be in the range of $19 to $22 million with total worldwide exploration expense averaging between $35 and $40 million.

In the worldwide downstream business, the Company expects to post a loss of approximately $10 million for the quarter reflecting the erosion of Gulf Coast refining margins as well as reduced U.S. refinery runs during the start up of the Meraux refinery including new units brought online with the completion of the Clean Fuels project.

Corporate charges are expected to rise to $15 million this quarter reflecting the reduction in capitalized interest as the Medusa and Habanero developments in the deepwater Gulf of Mexico and the Clean Fuels project at the Meraux refinery are now completed.

Earnings may also vary based on prices, volumes and the timing of actual liftings of some of the Company's crude oil production.

The forward-looking statements reflected in this release are made in reliance upon the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. No assurance can be given that the results discussed herein will be attained, and certain important factors that may cause actual results to differ materially are contained in Murphy's January 15, 1997 Form 8-K report on file with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

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SOURCE: Murphy Oil Corporation