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HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO
Form 8-K
November 10, 2003

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): November 10, 2003

THE HOUSTON EXPLORATION COMPANY
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

DELAWARE (State or other jurisdiction of incorporation)	001-11899 (Commission File Number)	22-2674487 (I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)
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1100 LOUISIANA, SUITE 2000 HOUSTON, TEXAS (Address of principal executive offices)	77002-5215 (Zip Code)
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Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (713) 830-6800

NOT APPLICABLE
(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

ITEM 7. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND EXHIBITS

(C) EXHIBITS

99.1 Notice to Directors and Officers November 10, 2003.

ITEM 11. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF TRADING UNDER REGISTRANT'S EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS.

On November 10, 2003 The Houston Exploration Company received notice from The Houston Exploration Company 401(k) Plan and Trust regarding a blackout period, as defined in Rule 100 of Regulation BTR. The notice required by Rule 104 of Regulation BTR was provided to directors and executive officers by the Company on November 10, 2003 and is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1. The foregoing description is qualified by reference to such exhibit.

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SIGNATURE

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

By: /s/ James F. Westmoreland

James F. Westmoreland
Vice President and Chief
Accounting Officer

Dated: November 10, 2003

Index to Exhibits

Exhibit Number -----	Description -----
99.1	Notice to Directors and Officers November 10, 2003.