

Lead

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So, it's not easy to find out how your unit is classified by the planners in the headquarters offices of your supplier. Please don't get the idea that it's impossible to get a straight answer on this from your oil company representatives. It's just that most of them either don't really have the information or can't see any benefit in sharing it with you. They are overloaded for the most part already and don't feel the need to take on more problems. And the vast majority are also carrying around a full basket of fear about getting "surplussed" themselves, or "early-retired," or whatever their particular employer calls downsizing or head count reduction. You see, that's what any company does when they are planning to service fewer accounts.

Therefore, you'll probably have to face this big question pretty much on your own or, if you're fortunate, with the advice and counsel of an informed advisor provided you are able to hire one. And that big question is:

How does my supplier view the future of my station over the next 5-10 years?

Actually, there are a lot of things you can do all by yourself to fairly well figure out the answer to this question without any help from your supplier at all. Just start thinking like Big O il thinks and go collect the answers to these questions:

1. How big is my lot?
2. How big are the properties pumping super amounts of fuel?
3. Does my supplier own the land under my station? If so, what's its market value?
4. Does my supplier lease the land and if so, from whom and when does that lease expire? Also, what's the market value?
5. Has my representative talked to me about rebuilding my station and, if so, when? And into what configuration?
6. Do I have the latest MPDs, computer capabilities, fresh and modern signage, etc.?
7. Has my supplier invested \$200,000+ all at once in my location (other than government-mandated tank replacements) any time in the last 3 years?

If you have an undersized lot (less than 30,000 square feet) and a short underlying lease, no one's mentioned rebuilding and the improvements are getting old and nothing significant has been spent on your station recently....you're probably already on one of the above mentioned lists and will become a statistic in the not too distant future. Should this describe your situation, it's time to get busy in a hurry and decide what you want to do and what you can do to take control of your life and assure a livelihood for your family because it won't be coming from your present station much longer.

Well, so much for now. Stay tuned for Part 2 of this

series in your next newsletter, where we'll discuss more of your concerns about changes you are facing today and your ultimate decision to LEAD, FOLLOW or GET OUT of the way.

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