

Potential U.S. Fastener Demanding Markets in 2026: Gas & Oil Fasteners

Fasteners rarely command attention in energy market headlines, yet they are integral to nearly every segment of the oil and gas value chain. From upstream production equipment and field infrastructure to pipelines, compressor stations, LNG export terminals, refineries, and petrochemical facilities, bolts, studs, nuts, washers, anchors, and threaded rod are essential to both construction and maintenance. As with other fastener end markets, however, trade data do not isolate “oil and gas fasteners” as a distinct category.

Harmonized tariff classifications identify fasteners by product type and material, such as heading 7318 for screws, bolts, nuts, and washers, and 7317 for nails and similar articles, rather than by the industry in which those products are ultimately used. That makes it necessary to assess likely 2026 demand indirectly, through energy production trends, infrastructure development, maintenance activity, and trade policy.

On that basis, the 2026 outlook for U.S. oil and gas fasteners appears selectively favorable rather than uniformly strong. The latest EIA outlook projects U.S. crude oil production at 13.5 million barrels per day in 2026, while marketed natural gas production is expected to rise 2% and U.S. LNG exports are forecast to average 17.0 billion cubic feet per day. Those figures point to a **market that remains fundamentally active, with the strongest momentum concentrated in gas-linked infrastructure, export capacity, and maintenance-intensive assets** rather than in a broad-based drilling surge.



LNG Expansion, Midstream Buildout, and the Strength of Brownfield Demand

The clearest growth market for industrial fasteners in 2026 is U.S. LNG infrastructure. EIA expects an additional 0.9 Bcf/d of nameplate LNG export capacity to come online in the Q2 of 2026, including Corpus Christi Stage 3 Train 5 and Golden Pass Train 1. At the same time, U.S. LNG exports are projected to average 17.0 Bcf/d for the year. That combination of record export volumes and incremental capacity additions supports demand for fastening products used in structural steel, pipe supports, valve assemblies, cryogenic equipment, rotating machinery, and maintenance-critical bolting systems. **LNG projects are not only large; they are also specification-heavy, which tends to favor higher-value fastening products over commoditized volume alone.**



Closely tied to LNG is the broader midstream buildout across the South-Central United States. EIA reports that natural gas pipeline projects completed in 2025 added approximately 6.3 Bcf/d of capacity nationwide, with 85% of that new capacity, which amounted to about 5.3 Bcf/d, dedicated to delivering gas to the South Central region. Much of that infrastructure is linked to Gulf Coast demand, where LNG growth remains the key driver. EIA also notes that projects completed in 2025 expanded capacity from supply basins such as Haynesville and connected additional feedgas directly to Plaquemines LNG. For fastener demand, that points to **Texas and Louisiana as the most promising regional markets in 2026, especially for products tied to compression, pipe racks, structural anchoring, and gas-processing infrastructure.**



Upstream oil and gas activity should remain supportive, though the signal is more stable than explosive. The Dallas Fed's first-quarter 2026 Energy Survey found that oil and gas activity increased, but production was little changed and outlook uncertainty remained elevated. That aligns with the EIA forecast of 13.5 million barrels per day of U.S. crude production in 2026, still near record levels, but not indicative of a runaway expansion cycle. In practical terms, this suggests continued demand for fasteners used in field equipment, tank batteries, artificial lift systems, pads, and gathering infrastructure in core basins such as the Permian, but with capital discipline likely to keep greenfield growth measured. The most durable demand base, however, is likely to come from maintenance, turnarounds, and brownfield upgrades across existing oil and gas assets. U.S. refineries were operating at a 91.4% utilization rate in January 2026, and EIA notes that while a small refinery came online in Texas in 2022, the newest U.S. refinery with significant downstream unit capacity dates to Garyville, Louisiana, in 1977. In other words, the industry is operating a large, heavily utilized, and in many cases aging installed base. That reality supports recurring demand for stud bolts, heavy hex nuts, threaded rod, anchor bolts, and corrosion-related replacement hardware used in flanged connections, shutdown work, and integrity management. For fastener suppliers, this maintenance cycle may prove more reliable in 2026 than any single wave of new construction.



Trade Policy, Tariffs, and Sourcing Risk

While demand fundamentals are reasonably constructive, trade policy remains the major source of uncertainty. In April 2026, the White House modified the Section 232 regime so that additional duties on covered aluminum, steel, and copper articles (and certain derivative articles) apply to the full customs value of the imported product. For many covered items, the applicable additional ad valorem rate is 50%, with reduced treatment for certain United Kingdom-origin products and for some derivative articles made entirely from U.S.-origin metal. For metal-intensive fastening products and related steel derivatives, these rules matter because they affect landed cost, compliance documentation, and country-of-origin strategy all at once.

Section 301 tariffs tied to China also remain part of the landscape. USTR announced in November 2025 that 178 exclusions were extended until November 10, 2026, meaning the broader Section 301 framework remains in place even as specific exclusions continue for a defined set of products. In parallel, product-specific trade remedies continue to affect parts of the fastener universe. In April 2025, the USITC determined that the

antidumping order on steel nails from China should remain in place, and in June 2025 it determined that the antidumping and countervailing duty orders on carbon and alloy steel threaded rod from China, India, Taiwan, and Thailand should also remain in force. For oil and gas supply chains, threaded rods are particularly relevant because they sit closer to industrial and infrastructure applications than purely retail fastener categories do.

The practical consequence is not necessarily weaker end demand, but a more difficult sourcing environment. **Oil and gas fastening applications are often specification-driven, schedule-sensitive, and less flexible than consumer channels when it comes to substitution.** When tariffs rise, exclusions narrow, or trade orders remain in force across key supply countries, buyers face a more complicated mix of supplier qualifications, inventory planning, and cost recovery. In 2026, the greater risk may be pricing instability and lead-time disruption rather than any broad collapse in fastener consumption. The suppliers best positioned to benefit are likely to be those that can combine sourcing diversification with strong documentation and dependable availability.





Outlook: Constructive Demand, Conditional Stability

Taken together, the 2026 outlook for U.S. oil and gas fasteners can be described as cautiously constructive. **The strongest demand pockets are likely to be Gulf Coast LNG facilities, South Central gas transmission and compression projects, refinery and gas-processing maintenance work, and selective upstream activity in core producing regions.** Gas-linked infrastructure appears better positioned than oil-led greenfield expansion, while maintenance and integrity work provide the most dependable floor for demand across the sector.

In practical terms, 2026 is more likely to be characterized by steady project execution and recurring MRO demand than by dramatic volume growth. The market should remain active because the U.S. is simultaneously expanding LNG and midstream capacity while operating a large installed base of aging, high-utilization oil and gas assets. Yet that positive demand picture comes with a clear qualifier: trade policy remains capable of shifting cost structures and sourcing patterns quickly. For fastener suppliers and importers, success in this environment will depend less on chasing headline growth and more on maintaining supply continuity, compliance discipline, and pricing flexibility.

Ultimately, oil and gas fasteners benefit from the same underlying advantage seen in other end markets: they are indispensable. Pipelines, LNG trains, compressor stations, refineries, and production sites cannot be built, repaired, or kept online without secure fastening systems. So long as U.S. natural gas exports continue to expand, crude production remains near record levels, and operators continue investing in maintenance and reliability, baseline demand for oil and gas fasteners should remain fundamentally sound in 2026. The larger question is not whether the market will need fasteners, but how efficiently the industry can source them in an environment shaped by tariffs, trade remedies, and ongoing policy uncertainty. ■

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