

HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO
 Form 3
 April 13, 2005

FORM 3 UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

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INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,
 Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section
 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person * Â Bergeron Jr John E (Last) (First) (Middle)	2. Date of Event Requiring Statement (Month/Day/Year) 03/10/2005	3. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO [THX]	4. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> 10% Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Other (give title below) (specify below) VP and Gen. Manager Offshore	5. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)
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THE HOUSTON EXPLORATION COMPANY,Â 1100 LOUISIANA ST., SUITE 2000
 (Street)

HOUSTON,Â TXÂ 77002
 (City) (State) (Zip)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 4)	2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4)	3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
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Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

SEC 1473 (7-02)

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative	5. Ownership Form of Derivative Security:	6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
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	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares	Security	Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	
employee stock option (right to buy)	03/10/2006 ⁽¹⁾	03/10/2015 ⁽¹⁾	common stock	25,000	\$ 57.35	D	Â

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
Bergeron Jr John E THE HOUSTON EXPLORATION COMPANY 1100 LOUISIANA ST., SUITE 2000 HOUSTON, TX 77002	Â	Â	Â VP and Gen. Manager Offshore	Â

Signatures

/s/ John E. Bergeron, Jr. 04/13/2005

**Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 5(b)(v).
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) Employee stock options vest in five equal annual installments beginning on the first anniversary of the date of grant and expire 10 years from the date of grant.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, See Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.