
**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) October 26, 2011

WESTAR ENERGY, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

KANSAS

(State or other jurisdiction
of incorporation or organization)

1-3523

(Commission
File Number)

48-0290150

(IRS Employer
Identification No.)

818 South Kansas Avenue, Topeka, Kansas

(Address of principal executive offices)

66612

(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code (785) 575-6300

Not Applicable

(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
 - Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))
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Item 5.02. Departure of Directors or Certain Officers; Election of Directors; Appointment of Certain Officers; Compensatory Arrangements of Certain Officers.

On October 26, 2011, Richard L. Hawley was appointed to our board of directors as a Class II director. Mr. Hawley has been assigned to serve on the Audit Committee and on the Compensation Committee of our board of directors. Mr. Hawley will receive the standard compensation paid to, and will be eligible to participate in the Non-Employee Director Deferred Compensation Plan available to, our non-employee directors as disclosed in our 2011 Proxy Statement under the caption "Director Compensation."

A press release announcing his appointment is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.

Exhibit 99.1 Press Release dated October 26, 2011

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.

Westar Energy, Inc.

Date: October 26, 2011

By: /s/ Larry D. Irick

Name: Larry D. Irick

Title: Vice President, General Counsel
and Corporate Secretary

EXHIBIT INDEX

<u>Exhibit Number</u>	<u>Description of Exhibit</u>
Exhibit 99.1	Press Release dated October 26, 2011

**Media contact:**

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WESTAR ENERGY NAMES NEW MEMBER TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TOPEKA, Kan., Oct. 26, 2011 — Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE:WR) today announced the appointment of Richard L. Hawley to its board of directors. As a member of the Westar Energy board, Hawley will serve on the audit and compensation committees.

Hawley is executive vice president and chief financial officer of Nicor Inc., one of the nation's largest natural gas utilities headquartered in Naperville, Ill., a position he has held since 2003. Prior to joining Nicor, Hawley served as the chief financial officer of Puget Energy, Inc., the largest electric and natural gas utility in the state of Washington, from 1998 to 2002. From 1973 to 1998, Mr. Hawley had a career with Coopers & Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), an international auditing firm, where he became partner in 1984 and his practice focused on the utility, insurance and forest products industries. Hawley also serves on the board of Fisher Communications, Inc.

"Mr. Hawley's professional accomplishments are outstanding, and he brings to the Board the rare combination of substantial utility industry experience and knowledge, along with many years of practice in the auditing profession," said Charles Q. Chandler IV, Westar Energy chairman of the board.

Hawley, 62, earned his bachelor of business administration from the University of Washington, and he is a certified public accountant.

Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 687,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has about 7,100 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates more than 34,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.WestarEnergy.com>. Westar Energy is on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/WestarEnergyInc and Twitter: www.Twitter.com/WestarEnergy.