FORM 4

## UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

| OMB APPROVAL        |           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| OMB Number:         | 3235-0287 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Estimated average t | ourden    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

0.5

hours per response:

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person*  RUELLE MARK A  |   |  |   |  | 2. Issuer Name <b>and</b> Ticker or Trading Symbol WESTAR ENERGY INC /KS [ WR ] |                          |   |     |                  |  |                    |   |  | eck all app<br>Dired   | olicable)<br>ctor  |   | 6 Owner   |                                       |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|--------------------------|---|-----|------------------|--|--------------------|---|--|------------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
|  |   |  |   |  | 3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) 01/14/2004                     |                          |   |     |                  |  |                    |   |  | X below                | ,  | bel   | er (specify<br>ow)  |                                       |
| (Street) TOPEKA KS 66612 (City) (State) (Zip)  |   |  | 4. If   | 4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year) |   |                          |   |     |                  |  | Line               | e)<br>X Forn<br>Forn  | ividual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable  Form filed by One Reporting Person  Form filed by More than One Reporting  Person |                        |  |   |   |                                       |
| Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned   |   |  |   |  |   |                          |   |     |                  |  |                    |   |  |                        |  |   |   |                                       |
| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)  2. Transact Date (Month/Day)  |   |  |   |  | Execution Date,   |                          | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 5) 4. Securities Ad Disposed Of (D 5) |     |                  |  |                    |   | Secur<br>Benef<br>Owne   | icially<br>d Following | 6. Ownershi<br>Form: Direct<br>(D) or Indirect<br>(I) (Instr. 4) | of Indirect<br>Beneficial<br>Ownership  |   |                                       |
|  |   |  |   |  |   |                          | Code  | v   | Amount           | (A<br>(D   | ) or<br>)          | Price   |  | action(s)<br>3 and 4)  |  | (Instr. 4)  |   |                                       |
| Common Stock, Par Value \$5.00 01/14/2   |   |  |   |  | 2004  |                          | F <sup>(1)</sup>  |     | 12,806           | 6 D \$19   |                    | \$19.9  | )1 11  | 112,194 <sup>(2)</sup> |  |   |   |                                       |
| Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities) |   |  |   |  |   |                          |   |     |                  |  |                    |   |  |                        |  |   |   |                                       |
| 1. Title of<br>Derivative<br>Security<br>(Instr. 3)  | 2.<br>Conversion<br>or Exercise<br>Price of<br>Derivative<br>Security | 3. Transaction<br>Date<br>(Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed<br>Execution I<br>if any<br>(Month/Day | Date,  |   | Transaction Code (Instr. |   | of  |                  | 6. Date Exercisable<br>Expiration Date<br>(Month/Day/Year) |                    | Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Ins and 4) |  | tr. 3                  | 3. Price of<br>Derivative<br>Security<br>Instr. 5)               | 9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction (Instr. 4) | Ownership<br>Form:<br>Direct (D)<br>or Indirect<br>(I) (Instr. 4) | Beneficial<br>Ownership<br>(Instr. 4) |
|  |   |  |   |  | Code  | v                        | (A)   | (D) | Date<br>Exercisa |  | Expiration<br>Date | Title   | or<br>Num<br>of<br>Shar  | .                      |  |   |   |                                       |

## Explanation of Responses:

- 1. 12,806 shares were forfeited for the payment of taxes after 31,250 restricted share units vested and were distributed to the Reporting Person. The restricted share units were included in the Reporting Person's previously filed Section 16 reports.
- 2. Includes 93,750 restricted share units which are subject to forfeiture.

## Remarks:

Mark A. Ruelle 01/15/2004

\*\* Signature of Reporting Person Date

 $Reminder: Report \ on \ a \ separate \ line \ for \ each \ class \ of \ securities \ beneficially \ owned \ directly.$ 

- $^{\star}$  If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4 (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).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

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 Number.