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**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

Washington, D.C. 20549

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**FORM 8-K**

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**Current Report**

Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934

**January 14, 2003**

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported)

**WESTAR ENERGY, INC.**

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

**Kansas**

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(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or  
organization)

**1-3523**

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(Commission file number)

**48-0290150**

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(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

**818 South Kansas Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66612**

(Address of principal executive offices)

**(785) 575-6300**

(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

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Item 5. Other Events

We announced today the appointment of Mark A. Ruelle as our executive vice president and chief financial officer effective immediately. Mr. Ruelle is a former officer of Westar Energy and served in various financial planning and management positions from 1986 to 1997. He most recently served in various executive positions at Sierra Pacific Resources, Inc., the owner of the largest electric utilities in Nevada. At Sierra Pacific Resources, Ruelle served four years as senior vice president and chief financial officer and one year as president of its Nevada Power Company unit. A copy of our press release issued January 14, 2003 is attached to this report.

Item 7. Financial Statements and Exhibits

(c) Exhibits

Exhibit 99.1 — Press Release dated January 14, 2003.

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 thereunto duly authorized.

**Westar Energy, Inc.**

Date: January 14, 2003

By /s/ LARRY D. IRICK

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Larry D. Irick, Vice President and Corporate Secretary

EXHIBIT INDEX

**Exhibit Number**

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**Description of Exhibit**

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99.1

Press Release dated January 14, 2003



**Media contact:**  
Corporate Communications  
Phone: 785.575.8401  
FAX: 785.575.6399  
news@wr.com

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**WESTAR ENERGY ANNOUNCES NEW CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

TOPEKA, Kan., January 14, 2003 — Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE:WR) announced today the appointment of Mark A. Ruelle as executive vice president and chief financial officer effective immediately.

Ruelle is a former officer of Westar Energy and served in various financial planning and management positions from 1986 to 1997. He most recently served in various executive positions at Sierra Pacific Resources, Inc. (NYSE: SRP), the owner of the largest electric utilities in Nevada. At Sierra Pacific Resources, Ruelle served four years as senior vice president and chief financial officer and one year as president of its Nevada Power Company unit.

“Mark Ruelle brings tremendous financial expertise and experience to the management team,” said James Haines, Westar Energy chief executive officer and president. “This is complemented by significant operational experience.”

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Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is a consumer services company with interests in monitored services and energy. The company has total assets of approximately \$7 billion, including security company holdings through ownership of Protection One, Inc. (NYSE: POI) and Protection One Europe, which have approximately 1.2 million security customers. Westar Energy is the largest electric utility in Kansas providing service to about 647,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has nearly 6,000 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates more than 34,700 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines. Through its ownership in ONEOK, Inc. (NYSE: OKE), a Tulsa, Okla.- based natural gas company, Westar Energy has a 44.7 percent interest in one of the largest natural gas distribution companies in the nation, serving more than 1.4 million customers.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.wr.com>.

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## Westar Energy, Inc. announces new chief financial officer 2

Forward-looking statements: Certain matters discussed here and elsewhere in this news release are “forward-looking statements.” The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 has established that these statements qualify for safe harbors from liability. Forward-looking statements may include words like we “believe,” “anticipate,” “expect” or words of similar meaning. Forward-looking statements describe our future plans, objectives, expectations or goals. Such statements address future events and conditions concerning capital expenditures, earnings, liquidity and capital resources, litigation, rate and other regulatory matters, possible corporate restructurings, mergers, acquisitions, dispositions, including the proposed separation of Westar Industries, Inc. from our electric utility businesses and the possible sale of our ONEOK, Inc. stock, compliance with debt and other restrictive covenants, changes in accounting requirements and other accounting matters, interest and dividends, Protection One’s financial condition and its impact on our consolidated results, environmental matters, changing weather, nuclear operations, ability to enter new markets successfully and capitalize on growth opportunities in non-regulated businesses, events in foreign markets in which investments have been made and the overall economy of our service area. What happens in each case could vary materially from what we expect because of such things as electric utility deregulation or re-regulation; ongoing municipal, state and federal activities, such as the Wichita municipalization effort; future economic conditions; political, legislative and regulatory developments; regulated and competitive markets; changes in the 10-year United States Treasury rates and the corresponding impact on the fair value of our call option contract, and other circumstances affecting anticipated operations, sales and costs. Any forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date such statement was made, and we do not undertake any obligation to update any forward-looking statement to reflect events or circumstances after the date on which such statement was made.