



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
PHIL BRYANT, GOVERNOR
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
TRUDY D. FISHER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Gary Rikard

JACKSON—Gov. Phil Bryant has named Gary Rikard to succeed Trudy Fisher as executive director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. Fisher, who has served as executive director since 2007, has announced her intentions to return to the private sector at the end of the summer.

“Trudy has worked tirelessly in her capacity as executive director, and I thank her for her service. Under her guidance, Mississippi has responded to significant environmental disasters, and she has ensured environmental protection while leading the agency to achieve speed and efficiency in its permitting process—something that sets Mississippi apart among economic competitors.”

Rikard, a partner with Butler Snow, LLP, has practiced environmental law since 1996, serving as senior attorney at MDEQ from 1996-1998. Prior to earning his law degree, he worked as an environmental engineer at MDEQ, specializing in permitting and water quality compliance issues. He served more than 22 years in the Mississippi National Guard, retiring with the rank of Major. During his service with the National Guard, he served as assistant staff judge advocate, acting as the primary legal officer for environmental matters.

“I am very pleased to appoint Gary to lead the Department of Environmental Quality,” Gov. Phil Bryant said. “He has the legal and technical expertise to ensure that Mississippi’s environmental conservation and economic growth priorities are achieved in concert with one another. He has worked for the agency previously in both a legal and in an engineering capacity, and his experience has prepared him well to take on this leadership position.”

Rikard’s specialized legal experience includes negotiating complex permitting and enforcement issues before the United States Environmental Protection Agency and representing MDEQ before the Mississippi Supreme Court. He is experienced in a wide array of state and federal environmental standards including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the Mississippi Air and Water Pollution Control Law and the Mississippi Solid Waste Act.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Christian Brothers University, has completed graduate studies in environmental engineering at the University of Mississippi School of Engineering, and holds a juris doctor degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. He is admitted to the Mississippi Bar and the Tennessee Bar.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to serve in this capacity, and I am humbled by Gov. Bryant’s choice and by his faith in me,” Rikard said. “I look forward to the challenge and to leading an agency that is tasked with such an important mission.”

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