

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For photos and support materials, please visit our [MEDIA KIT](#).

Burns & McDonnell Names Two New Senior Executives of Key Business Areas
Scott Strawn to Lead Energy Group and Mark Knaack to Lead Environmental Services Group Starting in 2024

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (Aug. 3, 2023) — [Burns & McDonnell](#), a \$6.9 billion engineering, construction and architecture firm, announced new leadership of two of its businesses in preparation for retirement of current leaders.

[Scott Strawn](#), PE, will serve as the general manager of the Energy Group, succeeding [Rick Halil](#), who will retire at the end of the year after 34 years with the company.

[Mark Knaack](#), PH, will be the next general manager of the Environmental Services Group and succeed [Steve Nalefski](#), PG, who is retiring at the end of the year after a 38-year career.

“The leadership team at Burns & McDonnell is critical to our firm’s success,” says Ray Kowalik, chairman and CEO, Burns & McDonnell. “We have been preparing and planning for this high transition year for Burns & Mac. Having strong leadership in place to lead us now and into the future is paramount to the success of our firm. I can’t thank Rick and Steve enough for their leadership and commitment and am excited to see where Scott and Mark take us into the future.”

Energy Group

Strawn currently leads sales and strategy for the Energy Group, one of the firm’s largest businesses, and has been crucial to the group’s innovation and growth. Under his leadership, sales and revenue for the Energy Group have grown by more than five times since 2018. Since joining the firm as a mechanical engineer in 2006, Strawn served as an account manager for more than 10 years before being promoted to his current role. He was named an officer of the firm in 2020.

“It is such an exciting time to have the opportunity to lead our group during an absolutely transformational time in the power industry,” Strawn says. “Since 2014, Rick led the growth of the group from \$375 million to \$1.7 billion in revenue and to more than 1,000 employees. Through dedication to our customers’ success, we are industry leading in fossil, nuclear, renewables and decarbonization. We have achieved No. 1 in design and No. 4 in construction in *Engineering News-Record’s* Power sector rankings. I am excited to continue building upon the foundation we’ve created while diversifying our

offerings to help our customers develop future major capital projects, new generation, renewable/decarbonization initiatives and prudent capital investment strategies.”

Halil joined Burns & McDonnell in 1989 and has spent his entire career growing the firm’s power business. He has worked in all aspects of the engineering and construction business, including marketing, project development, estimating, project management and, most recently, division leadership. He was instrumental in the acquisition and integration of the company’s union construction subsidiary, AZCO. He became general manager of Energy in 2015 and was named president in 2018.

Environmental Services Group

Knaack brings nearly three decades of experience in the environmental industry to his new role, with a unique blend of emergency response, environmental insurance and consulting experience. Knaack has direct experience assisting clients in the mitigation of environmental liabilities and the development of risk management programs. He joined Burns & McDonnell in 2005 and is currently the Texas Regional Environmental Manager in the firm’s Houston office. Knaack also led the Environmental Services Group expansion into Mumbai, India, and the addition of environmental construction services in the Gulf Coast. He will relocate to Kansas City, Missouri.

“I am honored to take the reins as the Environmental Services Group continues to grow and diversify its services,” Knaack says. “Under Steve’s leadership, we saw significant growth in our renewables work and our EPC remediation practice, developed a conservation mitigation banking program, and moved up to No. 11 on the *Engineering News-Record* Top 200 Environmental Firms ranking, compared to No. 21 in 2022. I hope to continue this incredible growth.”

Nalefski devoted his time to environmental management consulting, with an emphasis on environmental assessment and remediation. A registered geologist in multiple states, he led project teams on complex cleanup programs worldwide, most notably in the oil, gas and chemical industries. He also assisted clients in the development and implementation of global compliance programs and environmental management systems. Nalefski joined Burns & McDonnell in 2016 as vice president and general manager of Environmental Services and was named a senior vice president in 2021.

This year Burns & McDonnell has named [Leslie Duke](#), PE, the incoming CEO beginning in 2024, [Jamey Bertram](#), PE, as the new general manager for Transmission & Distribution and [Allen Xi](#), PE, as the new general manager of the South Central Region.

###

About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of more than 13,500 engineers, construction and craft professionals, architects, planners, technologists, and scientists to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we



Contact: Mary Young, Burns & McDonnell
816-809-2677
meyoung@burnsmcd.com

offer full-service capabilities. Founded in 1898 and working from 70 offices globally, Burns & McDonnell is 100% employee-owned. Learn how we are [designed to build](#).