



**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Watco Announces Rick Webb as Executive Chairman, Dan Smith as CEO and Rick Baden as President and CFO**

**PITTSBURG, KS – July 16, 2018** - Watco Companies, LLC, announces Rick Webb, CEO, will be assuming the role of executive chairman. As part of Watco's strategic succession plan, Dan Smith, currently Watco's executive vice president and chief operating officer, will succeed Webb as CEO. The transition will be ongoing through the month of July and finalized July 31. Rick Baden will continue serving in his role of president and CFO.

Webb's new role will be to continue to assist Smith and Baden, as well as all other Watco Leaders in the support and development of the Watco Team and its ability to serve Watco Customers.

"It's been a tremendous honor to serve as CEO of Watco over the last two decades and I am very excited for this upcoming chapter. Watco has experienced phenomenal growth and success for 35 years because we have always strived to put the right people in the right spots to improve service to our Customers. Because of that focus, I believe it's the right time to make the changes in leadership to better position the Watco Team for future success," stated Webb.

"Dan has been a key champion of the Watco culture and has been extremely effective in leading our Teams to success. He has an incredible ability to engage, coach, inspire, and connect with our Watco Team Members, Customers, and Partners. I am confident that Dan's vision and ability to help the Watco Team execute will lead to even more success for Watco."

Smith joined the Watco Team in 2009 and has held various leadership roles during his tenure. He has most recently served as chief operating officer since 2014. With Smith's leadership, the terminal division more than tripled in size. He spearheaded the purchase of full ownership of Greens Port Industrial Park, now operating as Greens Port Industrial Terminals, the largest privately-owned multi-tenanted industrial terminal in the Gulf Coast market. The transportation division also expanded its rail service area to the Eastern US with the addition of the Blue Ridge Southern in North Carolina, the Kanawha River in West Virginia and Ohio, and the Jacksonville Terminal Railroad in Florida.

Since Smith joined the Watco Team, he's had a strong focus on Team Member development, coaching, and organizational structure. This focus has led Watco's Operational Teams to record-setting safety performance, revenue growth, and Team Member retention. As CEO, Smith will continue to provide the leadership, management, and vision necessary to ensure that all divisions operate safely and efficiently to effectively attract and retain the best Team Members and continue to grow the company.

Smith stated, "I am honored to be a part of the Watco Team and I am excited to continue our focus on improving every day. We have the best Team in the industry, and with these changes, I do not expect anything less than a commitment from all of us to outperform yesterday. It will be business as usual across Watco thanks to the thousands of men and women who work so hard every day to make us successful. We will always remember that the real people who are in charge of Watco's future are the Watco Team Members in the field who serve our thousands of Customers each day."

Baden joined the company in December of 2004 as executive vice president and CFO. In January of 2011 he was named COO and then took on the role of president in 2014. Under Baden's leadership, Watco has established key strategic relationships with Kinder Morgan, Norfolk Southern, and SkyKnight Capital – Crowley. In addition, Baden played a key role in starting up Watco's Terminal and Port Services Division, expanding operations to Australia, building a second to none Support Services Team, as well as many other key improvements.

"RB has been an integral part of the growth and success that we have experienced since he joined the Team. He is one of the best at what he does and has a tremendous skill of being able to always focus on relationships no matter how challenging the situation might be. We have been blessed to have RB protecting our interests for a long time and look forward to his continued contributions going forward," said Webb.

Baden stated, "This succession plan will give our Team a great platform on which to grow and it will allow us to continue to develop our unique Watco culture. I'm proud to be a part of a Leadership Team that has the vision for mentoring and developing new leaders. When I joined Watco, from one of its Customers I knew the focus put on Customer Service, but I never imagined all the success that could come when you build a great Team that serves great Customers every day. It has been a great ride, but I believe the best is yet to come."

### **About Watco Companies, LLC**

Watco Companies, LLC, is a Pittsburg, Kansas, based transportation company providing transportation, terminal and port, mechanical, and supply chain services for Customers throughout North America and Australia. Watco Companies, LLC is the owner of Watco Transportation Services, LLC, one of the largest short line railroad holding companies in the U.S. with 38 U.S. short line railroads and 31 industrial contract switching locations. Watco's Terminal and Port Services division operates 87 locations throughout the U.S. Watco Companies is a 50/50 joint venture partner with The Greenbrier Companies, Inc., in GBW Railcar Services, LLC. GBW repairs and refurbishes freight cars at 31 locations across North America. WSCS provides supply chain services in highway, intermodal, rail logistics and international logistics.

More information about Watco and its subsidiaries can be found at [www.watcocompanies.com](http://www.watcocompanies.com).

**Contact:** [Tracie VanBecelaere](mailto:Tracie.VanBecelaere@watco.com), Communications Director 620.704.1288