

North Dakota Industrial Commission



Doug Burgum
Governor

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Attorney General

Doug Goehring
Agriculture Commissioner

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Industrial Commission appoints Claire Vigesaa as next executive director of the North Dakota Transmission Authority

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Industrial Commission (NDIC) has selected Claire Vigesaa to serve as the next executive director of the North Dakota Transmission Authority. Vigesaa retired in 2022 as general manager and CEO for the Upper Missouri Power Cooperative after a 40-year career in the electric cooperative industry. Vigesaa has been serving as deputy director of the Transmission Authority since retirement.

In a joint statement, Commission members said, "Claire's strong background and long career in the electric transmission industry will serve the Transmission Authority well as he steps into this new role. His technical expertise, along with his leadership experience serving on a wide variety of economic development boards, provides a unique skill set which will be needed to lead the Transmission Authority through North Dakota's next phase of development. We look forward to working with Claire and all of North Dakota's diverse energy stakeholders as we enter this new chapter of energy development in North Dakota."

As executive director of the Transmission Authority, Vigesaa will work with the NDIC to facilitate the development of transmission infrastructure in the state to accommodate new generation sources and to provide for a reliable and resilient electric grid. The Transmission Authority is a builder of last resort, meaning that private business has the first opportunity to invest in and/or build needed transmission. A robust transmission grid is important to the state as industries in North Dakota export electricity to neighboring states as well as hosting a reliable grid to serve growing industry needs. Generation sources include five lignite-based power plants, the Garrison Dam, several wind farms and natural gas-fired turbines.

Vigesaa is a Kensal, N.D., native. He graduated from North Dakota State University with a bachelor's degree in engineering. His career began at Verendrye Electric in Velva, followed by management roles at Northern Plains Electric in Carrington, Cass County Electric in Fargo and Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association in Denver prior to his last 10 years at Upper Missouri Power Cooperative. He became involved with both the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) and Southwest Power Pool (SPP) in his management role at Upper Missouri Power Cooperative.

Vigesaa served on several industry boards and committees throughout his career including the Western States Power Corp. board of directors, Midwest Electric Consumers Association board of directors, and the National Touchstone Energy Committee. He was integral to the development of several value-added ag processing projects including Dakota Growers Pasta in Carrington and the High Value Irrigated Task Force which culminated in the construction of the Cavendish Potato processing facility near Jamestown. He also served on other economic development corporation boards including as president of the Carrington Economic Development Corp. and on the executive board of the Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corp.

The NDIC consists of Gov. Doug Burgum as chairman, Attorney General Drew Wrigley, and Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring. The NDIC oversees the Transmission Authority, which was created by the Legislature in 2005.

For information contact the Industrial Commission at 701-328-3722.