

Oakleaf Appoints New President

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A Cabinet member for President George W. Bush has been appointed the new president and future chief executive officer of an East Hartford-based waste and recycling company.

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Steve Preston, who served as secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development during the Bush administration, will replace

current CEO Jim Barnes at Oakleaf, which manages a network of more than 5,000 waste haulers and recyclers across the country.

Barnes, who founded Oakleaf and has led the company for 14 years, will become chairman of Oakleaf's board of directors, where he will focus his efforts on large clients, major vendors and acquisitions, the company announced Friday.

"I am delighted to have someone of Steve's extraordinary talent join our organization to help guide it to the next level," Barnes said in a statement Friday.

Preston will assume the responsibilities of president immediately and become CEO later this year.

Before joining Bush's Cabinet, Preston spent nine years in various executive roles at The ServiceMaster Co. He also served as administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration for two years and was housing secretary from 2008 to 2009. He and his family are planning to relocate to the Hartford area, the company said.