

Snell & Wilmer



Michael W. Patten

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Main Bio

Michael Patten focuses his practice in the areas of public utilities, energy and telecommunications. He appears regularly before the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) on matters involving public utilities, electricity, water and wastewater, transmission and generation facilities, renewable energy, solar energy, energy storage, battery storage, interconnection, energy efficiency, gas distribution and telecommunications. He has participated as first chair counsel in numerous ACC proceedings including rate cases, mergers and acquisitions, financings, line sitings, service area extensions, formal complaints, rulemakings and policy dockets.

Through his decades of experience, Michael provides prompt, thoughtful, efficient and effective guidance with respect to a myriad of utility regulatory issues. He also has extensive litigation experience related to these and other areas of law.

Representative Experience

- Represented electric, gas, water and wastewater utilities in numerous rate case proceedings before the Arizona Corporation Commission
- Represented utilities in rulemaking and policy proceedings before the Arizona Corporation Commission regarding a variety of issues, including renewable portfolio standards, energy efficiency, interconnection requirements, competitive telecommunications, consumer privacy and protection, electric vehicles, small water company acquisitions, certificates of convenience and retail electric competition.
- Provided advice and obtained necessary regulatory approvals regarding various utility-related transactions, including mergers and acquisitions and financings
- Represented telecommunication providers before the Arizona Corporation Commission in obtaining certificates of convenience and necessity (CC&N) and Eligible Telecommunication Carrier (ETC) designations

Education

- Harvard Law School (J.D., 1984)
 - Executive Editor, Harvard Environmental Law Review
- Claremont McKenna College (B.A., Biology, summa cum laude, 1981)

Representative Presentations & Publications

- "Water Planning and its Impact on Water Utilities," Presenter, Arizona Water Laws and Regulations Seminar, HalfMoon Education Inc. (January 17, 2014)
- "Water Utility Regulation," Presenter, Arizona Water Laws and Regulations Seminar, HalfMoon Education Inc. (January 17, 2014)
- "Rulemaking and Regulatory Agencies in Arizona," Author, Arizona Environmental Law Manual, State Bar of Arizona (1995)
- Arizona Environmental Law Handbook, Co-Author and Co-Editor, Government Institutes, Inc. (1993)

Professional Recognition & Awards

- The Best Lawyers in America®, Communications Law, Energy Law, Administrative/Regulatory Law (2007-2020)
 - Phoenix Lawyer of the Year, Communications Law (2014, 2017, 2019)
 - Phoenix Lawyer of the Year, Administrative/Regulatory Law (2016, 2018, 2020)
 - Phoenix Lawyer of the Year, Energy Law (2012, 2015)
- Southwest Super Lawyers®, Utilities, Energy & Natural Resources, Communications (2010-2012), Utilities (2007)
- AZ Business Magazine's Top Lawyers, Energy (2014)

Community Involvement

- Newtown Community Development Corporation and Community Land Trust, Board Member (2004-2012, 2018-present)
- Wildfire (formerly Arizona Community Action Association), Board Member (2013-2018, 2019-present)
- Maricopa County Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program (adult guardianship matter) (2018-2019)
- Tempe Community Council, Former President and Board Member (1996-2003)
- City of Tempe, Transportation Commission, Former Chairman and Commissioner (1998-2004)
- City of Tempe, Planning and Zoning Commission, Former Chairman and Commissioner (1990-1997)

Other Professional Experience

- Roshka DeWulf & Patten, Member (2001-2015)
- Brown & Bain, Partner (1986-2001)
- United States District Court, District of Arizona, Law Clerk to the Honorable Charles L. Hardy (1984-1986)

Court Admissions

- Supreme Court of Arizona
- United States District Court, District of Arizona
- United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit