

Snell & Wilmer



Christopher P. Colyer

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Main Bio

Chris Colyer assists clients with transactional and litigation issues in the areas of environmental and natural resources, real estate, construction, and administrative law. His environmental practice includes advising clients on complex environmental issues associated with real estate and corporate transactions and representing clients in federal, state, and local permitting and litigation matters, including air quality, hazardous waste, water quality, underground storage tank, and Superfund compliance. Chris' real estate and administrative law practice includes representing large and medium-sized companies with municipal zoning approvals, liquor licensing, and other state and local governmental permitting issues. He also focuses on renewable energy regulation and development, including contracting, leasing, and permitting of solar and wind energy facilities on public, private, and tribal lands. Chris' construction practice includes negotiating and drafting construction contracts and representing owners and contractors in construction defect and payment disputes.

Representative Experience

- Defended client in international arbitration matter against claimant seeking over \$260 million in damages for alleged breach of contract
- Assisted multiple clients with environmental due diligence and management of environmental liabilities associated with the acquisition of over 200 properties in at least 38 states
- Represented clients in complex civil suits alleging claims under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Arizona Water Quality Assurance Revolving Fund (WQARF)
- Represented home builder in rezoning and entitlement of 170-unit single-family subdivision in Phoenix, Arizona
- Assisted client in acquisition, development and entitlement of 300,000 square foot beverage distribution facility
- Defended clients against United States Environmental Protection Agency enforcement actions alleging violations of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Toxic Substances Control Act and Clean Air Act
- Drafted complex environmental agreements for investigation, remediation and lease of an aircraft hangar at large international airport

- Counseled and advised client regarding environmental compliance requirements related to the purchase of 20 gas stations
- Performed environmental due diligence on behalf of potential purchasers and investors regarding environmental issues at various Arizona mines, including compliance with federal, state and local environmental permits and licenses
- Advised energy company regarding the development, zoning and environmental permitting of utility-scale solar facility in Maricopa County, Arizona
- Advised client regarding compliance with renewable energy and business leasing requirements under federal and tribal laws for proposed solar facility on tribal land
- Prepared formal legal opinions for third party lenders on behalf of borrower regarding solar and wind energy facility's compliance with state and local environmental law
- Represented clients before City of Phoenix, Town of Gilbert, and Maricopa County Zoning Adjustment Hearing Officers and Boards of Adjustment regarding applications for variances and use permits required under municipal zoning ordinances
- Advised client regarding Arizona Aquifer Protection Permit, municipal and non-municipal solid waste landfill programs, municipal floodplain and related environmental permit issues and requirements in connection with the proposed redevelopment of a former solid waste landfill
- Defended large construction and engineering companies against private party claims alleging construction or engineering defects
- Drafted and negotiated construction, engineering and maintenance agreements for the development and operation of renewable energy facilities

Education

- University of Kansas School of Law (J.D., 2009)
 - Articles Editor, Kansas Law Review
 - Business and Commercial Law Certificate Recipient
 - Robert E. Edmonds Award Recipient for Excellence in Corporate and Securities Law
 - University of Kansas School of Law Curriculum Committee Member
- University of Kansas (B.S., Business Administration, Emphasis in Finance, 2004)
 - Honor Societies: Beta Gamma Sigma and Golden Key International

Professional Memberships & Activities

- State Bar of Arizona
 - Environmental & Natural Resources Law Section
 - Chairman
 - Chair-Elect
 - Executive Council Secretary
 - Budget Officer
 - Program Chair
 - Member at Large
- American Bar Association

- Arizona Association of Defense Counsel
- Defense Research Institute
- Maricopa County Bar Association
 - Environmental Law Section Board
 - Board Member
- University of Kansas School of Law
 - Board of Governors
- ASU Mentorship Initiative in Sustainability Law
 - Mentor

Representative Presentations & Publications

- "Renewable Energy and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022," Presenter, Snell & Wilmer Webinar (September 9, 2022)
- "[In Case You Missed It: Key 2021 Environmental, Natural Resources, and Oil and Gas Topics](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil & Gas Law Blog (May 28, 2021)
- "Environmental and Natural Resources Law Update," Moderator, Arizona State Bar Convention (December 1, 2020)
- "PFOS/PFOA Primer," Presenter, Arizona State Bar Convention (December 1, 2020)
- "[States Challenge EPA's COVID-19 Enforcement Policy](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (June 2, 2020)
- "[EPA Announces COVID-19 Interim Field Work Guidance](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (April 14, 2020)
- "[ADEQ Issues COVID-19 Memo of Compliance & Enforcement](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (April 3, 2020)
- "[EPA Seeks Comment on Further PFAS Regulation](#)," Co-Author, S&W Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (December 9, 2019)
- "[PFAS: The Forever Chemicals Gaining Regulatory Attention](#)," Co-Author, S&W Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (December 3, 2019)
- "[EPA to Take Action to Improve Cost-Benefit Analyses for Agency Rulemakings](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (May 2019)
- "In-House Counsel Tool Kit: Employment Law Update," Moderator (November 14, 2018)
- "In-House Counsel Tool Kit: Managing and Protecting Intellectual Property," Moderator (September 20, 2018)
- "[Arizona Governor Doug Ducey Signs Legislation to Eliminate 'Chevron Deference'](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (April 13, 2018)
- "[Seven Months into the Trump Administration, Outlook of Controversial Obama-Era Ozone Standard Remains Hazy](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (August 25, 2017)
- "Preserving Subcontractor Claims for Delay, Disruption, and Cumulative Impacts," Co-Author, The American Subcontractors Association's Contractor's Compass (June 2017)

- "Getting More Pay and Less 'If' from Pay-If-Paid Clauses," Presenter, DHI ConNextions 2017 (May 10, 2017)
- "Eliminating Unnecessary Retainage," Co-Presenter, DHI ConNextions 2017 (May 10, 2017)
- "[Trump Cabinet Selections Signal Potential Changes to Environmental Regulations](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (December 20, 2016)
- "[Unconventional Business Development Tactics for Every Young Lawyer](#)," Author, Defense Research Institute's the Whisper Newsletter, Volume 12, Issue 10 (November 1, 2016)
- "[In a Victory for Businesses and Developers, the United States Supreme Court Holds that Clean Water Act Jurisdictional Determinations Are Appealable](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (May 31, 2016)
- "Environmental Considerations with Respect to Land Use," Presenter, National Business Institute (March 4, 2016)
- "[High Court Stay Could Spell Doom For EPA's Clean Power Plan](#)," Quoted in Article by Keith Goldberg, Law360 (February 10, 2016)
- "[Construction In The Courts](#)," Co-Author, The American Subcontractors Association's Contractor's Compass (December 2015)
- "[Clean Water Rule Halted in Arizona and Twelve Other States](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (August 31, 2015)
- "[EPA Issues a New, Lower Ozone Standard that Will Prove to Be a Challenge to Many States](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (October 2, 2015)
- "[The Obama Administration and EPA Issue Aggressive Clean Power Plan to Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Existing Power Plants](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (August 6, 2015)
- "[ADEQ Issues New and Revised Rules Regarding Agricultural Best Management Practices to Reduce Particulate Matter Emissions in Arizona Non-Attainment Areas](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (July 21, 2015)
- "[EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Issue Proposed Green House Gas Rules for Medium and Heavy-Duty Vehicles](#)," Author, Snell & Wilmer Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (June 24, 2015)
- "Dust Control Regulations Impacting Maricopa County Construction Sites," Presenter, State Bar of Arizona, Construction Law Section CLE Lunch Program (November 5, 2014)
- "Utilize 'Certificate of Merit' Statutes to Dismiss Frivolous Lawsuits in Early Stages of Litigation," Author, Defense Research Institute's the Whisper Newsletter, Volume 10, Issue 9 (October 7, 2014)
- "[D.C. Circuit Validates EPA's Consultation Process for Reviewing Clean Water Act Permits](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (July 2014)
- "[EPA Issues Proposed Rule to Significantly Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (July 2014)
- "[EPA Approves Maricopa County's Five Percent Dust Plan](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (June 6, 2014)
- "Performing All Appropriate Inquiry Under the ASTM E1527-13 Standard," Co-Author, Arizona State Law Journal, 46 Ariz. St.L.J. 449 (2014)
- "[EPA Issues Proposed Rule to Significantly Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (July 10, 2014)

- "[The Department of the Interior Issues New Rules Regulating the Leasing of Tribal Lands](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (December 7, 2012)
- "Doing Business in Arizona: A Legal Guide, 'Environmental'," Chapter Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer, 4th Edition (2012)
- "[EPA Finalizes and Revises Its Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Program Rule](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Under Construction Newsletter (December 2011)
- "[American Electric Power Co., Inc. v. Connecticut: The United States Supreme Court Holds that the Clean Air Act Preempts Federal Common Law, But Deadlocks on Standing Issues](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (June 24, 2011)
- "The Maricopa County PM-10 5% Plan: An Overview of EPA's Proposed Disapproval," Co-Author, 43 Arizona State Law Journal 879 (2011)
- "[Lender Liability for Clean Water Compliance](#)," Co-Author, American Bar Association's Natural Resources & Environment, Volume 25, Issue 4 (Spring 2011)
- "Searching for a Solution: The Lanham Act's 'Use in Commerce' Requirement in Search Engine Keyword Advertising Cases," Comment, Kansas Law Review, 56 University of Kansas Law Review 679 (2008)

Professional Recognition & Awards

- The Best Lawyers in America®, Construction Law, Energy Law (2023)
- Southwest Super Lawyers®, Rising Stars Edition, Environmental (2016-2022)

Community Involvement

- City of Phoenix Central City Village Planning Committee
 - Member
- City of Phoenix South Central Transit Oriented Development Steering Committee
 - Member
- Herberger Theater Center
 - Board Member
 - Young Leadership Board, Founder
 - Finance Committee
 - Contributed Revenue Committee
 - Objects d'Art Auction Committee
- Active 20-30 Club of Phoenix
 - Active Member
 - Membership Committee
- Arizona Myeloma Network
 - Board Member
- University of Kansas Alumni Association, Phoenix Chapter, Chapter Leader
 - 2014 Dick Wintermote Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award Recipient
- Duckhut Invitational Charity Golf Tournament Benefitting the American Cancer Society
 - Founder and Organizer

Previous Professional Experience

- City of Mesa Attorney's Office, Snell & Wilmer Public Service Fellowship Attorney (2009-2010)
- Douglas County, Kansas District Court, Law Clerk to Hon. Michael Malone (2007-2008)
- Payless ShoeSource, Inc., Financial Analyst (2004-2006)
- The Wagon Wheel, Manager (2002-2004)

Bar Admissions

- Arizona

Court Admissions

- Supreme Court of Arizona
- United States District Court, District of Arizona