



## Paul Sonderegger

Partner

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### PRACTICES

- Environmental
- Real Estate and Construction Litigation

### EDUCATION

- University of Iowa, J.D., with Distinction, 2001
- Washington University in St. Louis, B.A. in Political Science, with College Honors, 1998, W. Alfred Hayes Award, 1998, Academic All-American Second Team, 1997

### ADMISSIONS

- Illinois
- Missouri

### AFFILIATIONS

- Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, Chair, Environmental & Conservation Law Committee, 2011-2013

### EMPLOYMENT

- Thompson Coburn LLP Partner, 2010-Present Associate, 2001-2009

Paul is a highly effective litigator and regulatory compliance attorney who has resolved environmental and real estate/construction disputes in state and federal courts across the country.

In his environmental work, Paul counsels clients on groundwater and surface water issues, soil contamination and permit evaluations and transfers for the mining industry, chemical and plastics manufacturers and landfill operators. In court, he has both prosecuted and defended CERCLA contribution and cost recovery lawsuits, litigation under the Missouri "Spill Bill," cases involving Illinois Environmental Protection Act, the federal Clean Water Act and the Missouri Clean Water Law, as well as common law tort actions and contract disputes. In his compliance-side work, Paul has represented clients before and negotiated with the EPA, the Missouri DNR, the Illinois EPA, the U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Surface Mining and the Illinois DNR.

Paul works hard for clients to resolve matters both in court and during administrative proceedings. He participates in every facet of negotiation and litigation, including trying cases in court and before administrative hearing officers, arguing complex motions, representing clients during mediations and preparing and arguing appeals. He also successfully excluded expert testimony in numerous cases through strategic Daubert challenges.

Paul has special experience in permit transfers that are required when a client embarks on company and facility acquisitions. He evaluates the permits, monitors the deadlines to submit requisite paperwork and assists clients in preparing the necessary forms and notifications. Together with his permit team, Paul has handled permit transfers in 17 different countries and over 35 states.

In his real estate and construction work, Paul prosecutes and defends eminent domain lawsuits, commercial lease disputes and complex construction cases. He has handled soil, materials and grading defect claims as well as light rail construction projects and property acquisitions through condemnation. Paul has significant experience in commercial lease disputes on behalf of both landlords and tenants concerning rent disputes, maintenance obligations and additional rent and common area

## RECOGNITIONS

- Listed in The Best Lawyers in America (by BL Rankings) for Environmental Law, 2024
- Named to "Missouri Lawyers Weekly" Power List for Environmental & Energy Law, 2022-2023
- Included in Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers Rising Stars list, 2009-2015 (by Thomson Reuters)
- Missouri Lawyers Weekly Up and Coming Lawyer, 2008

## REPRESENTATIVE CLIENTS

- Air Liquide
- MilliporeSigma
- PolyOne
- Gander Mountain Company
- Environmental Operations
- Alberici Constructors
- Lillibridge Healthcare Services
- Flat Branch Mortgage

maintenance calculations.

## Experience

### • **Counsel for coal mining companies**

Paul has been a strong advocate for all aspects of his clients' mining operations and environmental compliance, serving as the primary litigator and regulatory compliance counsel for multiple national coal mining companies for over 15 years. In 2015, he successfully sought intervention in a citizen's suit case brought against the federal Office of Surface Mining, which was an attempt to upend ongoing reclamation operations at a client's mine. In 2012, Paul successfully represented a client before the Illinois Supreme Court when its mine permits were being challenged directly and indirectly. In 2010, he successfully obtained summary judgment in an administrative hearing brought by petitioners who wished to shut down a coal mine due to allegations of environmental non-compliance.

### • **Counsel for environmental contractors**

As an outgrowth of his work defending property owners at CERCLA sites, Paul has been the primary litigation counsel for several environmental contractors. He assists clients in developing sophisticated legal strategies that maximize the prospect of a favorable outcome. In 2015, Paul successfully resolved a more than four-year-long case involving allegations of improper disposal of solid waste material. The case raised CERCLA claims and common law causes of action, and involved numerous property owners, developers, banks, contractors and subcontractors.

### • **Counsel for permit transfers**

Paul acts as the primary permit evaluation and transfer attorney for many acquisitions both nationally and internationally. His projects and matters have covered 17 foreign countries and a majority of the states. He has put together a team of attorneys and environmental technical advisors that act as a "one-stop shop" for clients who need to transfer facility permits in the environmental, health and safety field.

### • **Counsel for construction defect claims**

Paul has served as the primary litigation counsel on large construction defect cases for national retailers, contractors, architects and engineers all over the United States. In 2016, he successfully settled a multi-million dollar lawsuit involving allegations of soil and structural defects. The matter involved many contractors, subcontractors and insurers, which complicated discovery, motion practice and negotiations. But Paul devised a strategy to overcome these obstacles and deliver a great result for his client.

### • **Counsel for commercial landlords and tenants**

Due to his court and trial experience, Paul is a "go-to" attorney for commercial landlords looking to oust problematic tenants and for tenants who want to exit problematic leases. He handles demands letters, presses these cases quickly and forcefully through the state courts and achieves decisive results for his clients.

