




Christopher R. Gibson

Partner

Environmental Law

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Overview

Chris is President of Archer and Chair of the firm's Litigation Department. A seasoned litigator and counselor, Chris has been representing national, regional and local corporations in a variety of complex civil and commercial litigation matters for almost 40 years. In his practice that encompasses multiple areas of law, Chris has amassed a compelling record of victories in high-stakes business disputes involving commercial, employment, environmental, construction, toxic tort/product liability, contractual, and insurance matters. Throughout his distinguished career, Chris has maintained long-standing relationships with companies, including South Jersey Industries, N.L. Industries, Hess Corporation, Crown Cork & Seal, and PRC Group serving as their local and regional counsel handling transactional and litigation matters. Chris also devotes a substantial part of his practice to serving as solicitor or general counsel to numerous government clients, including the Delaware River Port Authority, who look to him for his deep understanding of local, state and federal laws that affect the responsibilities and liabilities of public entities.

While Chris's work has impacted many industries, he is most notably known as one of New Jersey's leading environmental law attorneys, with a focus on complex environmental litigation, including multi-district, multi-party litigation, and pre-litigation counseling involving allegations of property damage, cleanup reimbursement, natural resource damages, and personal injury. He has represented and counseled clients on the investigation, cleanup, management, purchase, and sale of hundreds of environmentally impacted properties. He has significant experience negotiating settlement agreements with the EPA and NJDEP. Chris represents clients in Superfund and RCRA disputes, Clean Water and Air Act litigation, state law actions, citizen suits, and natural resource damage claims. Over the years, he has successfully tried many cases involving hundreds of millions of dollars in response costs or natural resource damage claims on behalf of many large chemical and petroleum

companies, and has shepherded a multitude of complex projects to completion. Chris is often at the center of helping his clients understand and minimize risks through contractual arrangements with counterparties or responsible parties, agreements with regulatory agencies, and/or environmental insurance policies, which serve an important role in resolving many site issues. Chris is highly sought after for his ability to settle and resolve complex environmental litigation matters, toxic tort and product liability defense, and handling of NRD remediation and restoration projects under CERCLA.

Chris's work on the front end of all types of litigation is crafted to reduce the chance of escalation, often prevailing at the earliest stages of a dispute. He is responsive, thorough, and effective; able to grasp the details without losing sight of the big picture to achieve client objectives. He aggressively advocates on behalf of his clients and measures his success, in part, by his ability to practically identify and efficiently mitigate the legal and business risks his clients face as a result of environmental lawsuits and enforcement actions. In all cases, Chris works to understand a problem from the client's perspective and treat the root cause of that problem, rather than the symptoms. He collaborates with his clients to improve their business processes and enhance their risk management. Chris relishes the opportunity to take on new, unique and complex problems for his clients and believes strongly in the importance of seeing all sides of an issue. He is driven to understand his clients' goals and knows that focused, efficient advocacy—along with a steady hand at the wheel—is the surest way to get them where they want to go.

Representative Experience

- Successfully represented the owner of defunct industrial operation involving more than 400 acres along the Raritan River in Middlesex County in a landmark New Jersey condemnation case. The condemnation proceedings encompassed complex issues of environmental remediation, redevelopment, and just compensation. Won key rulings at the trial and appellate levels, leading to a very favorable settlement.
- Winning the defense of a \$30 million appeal by Rohm and Haas Company and Owens-Illinois, Inc., on behalf of the firm's third-party defendant clients. The case involved the contamination of the Lipari Landfill in Pitman, N.J.
- Represented a large former manufacturer through a 5-week "bellwether" trial in a mass toxic tort action alleging toxic exposure to lead due to a former smelter in Detroit, Michigan. The trial included theories of exposure, causation and damages and required the direct and cross examination of multiple medical, toxicological and engineering experts. The jury awarded no personal injury damages and nominal property damages.
- Designing and implementing various case management techniques for complicated environmental, toxic tort and product liability litigation, which have been instrumental in efficiently managing these litigations and obtaining successful results for the firm's clients.
- Serving as lead trial counsel for 12 industrial companies in a class-action seeking property damages and personal injury arising out of exposure to a landfill.



- After many years, achieved a voluntary dismissal of all product liability claims of a worker claiming personal injury from hazardous exposure.

Professional and Community Involvement

- Member, Board of Trustees, Chemistry Council of New Jersey
- Member, Board of Trustees, Coriell Institute
- Member, Board of Trustees, Drumthwacket Foundation
- Former Chair, Board of Trustees, The College of New Jersey
- Former Member, Board of Trustees, Inspira Healthcare
- Camden County Bar Association
- Gloucester County Bar Association
- New Jersey State Bar Association
- American Bar Association

In the News

- “New Jersey Top 40: Litigation, Practice Diversity Set Firms Up for Growth,” *NJ Law Journal* (6/12/23)
- “For Those Knocking on the Door of the Am Law 200, Smaller Stature May Be an Asset,” *The American Lawyer* (5/18/20)

Credentials

Education

- Villanova University, JD
- Villanova University, BA, *magna cum laude*

Bar Admissions

- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania



Offices

- Voorhees, NJ

Areas of Focus

Practice

- Condemnation & Eminent Domain
- Environmental Law
- Environmental Litigation
- Natural Resource Damages & Assessments
- State & Local Government

Industries

- Education
- Transportation & Logistics

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