

Stephen M. Bruckner

Partner

402.978.5225

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Stephen (Steve) Bruckner's legal practice is concentrated in the field of energy, environmental, and natural resources law.

Serving as lead counsel for a major Midwestern electric utility, his legal experience includes complex environmental cleanup, enforcement, and citizen suit litigation. With extensive experience representing natural gas pipeline and distribution companies, he has zealously litigated rate cases at the commission, trial, and appellate court levels.

In addition to his litigation practice, Steve has handled numerous complex construction and development projects for the energy, environmental, and natural resources sectors, including power plant construction, renewable energy facilities, and purchased power contracts.

Experience

- General Counsel for large electric utility in Nebraska.
- Successful defense of lawsuit challenging client's award of nuclear decommissioning contract.
- Counsel in pending federal court action to recover damages for contamination from ethanol plant.
- *Source Gas Distribution (now Black Hills Energy)*; successful rate case actions, including defending judicial appeals.
- *City of Sidney v. Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska*; arbitration and judicial appeal involving wholesale energy contract transmission rate

Legal Services

Energy
Environmental & Toxic Torts
Business & Commercial Litigation
Government & Regulatory
Real Estate
Business & Corporate
Corporate Compliance & Administrative

Who I Serve

Energy & Natural Resources
Professional Service Providers
Construction
Manufacturing

Admissions

Nebraska
District of Columbia
U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit



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increase.

- *Nebraska Public Advocate v. SourceGas Distribution* (Nebraska Supreme Court); defense of SourceGas in collateral attack against \$8 million rate case order. District court ruled in favor of SourceGas. Decision upheld by Supreme Court of Nebraska.
- *KN Energy v. Cities of Alliance, et al.* (Lancaster County, Nebraska, District Court). Represented KN Energy in \$100 million natural gas rate case involving disallowance of cost recovery for long-term natural gas supply contract. Trial court ruled in favor of KN Energy. Decision affirmed by the Supreme Court of Nebraska.
- *City of Norfolk v. Downing, et al.* (Madison County, Nebraska, District Court); representation of City of Norfolk in suit seeking approximately \$7 million in damages for contamination of Norfolk's water supply from leaking underground gasoline tanks.
- *Trimble, et al. v. Asarco, Inc.* (U.S. District Court, District of Nebraska); co-counsel for the defense of class action on behalf of more than 80,000 property owners and renters in the eastern portion of the City of Omaha alleging lead contamination of property from operation of Asarco lead refinery. Potential liability for property cleanup exceeded \$1 billion. Following class action-related discovery, trial court dismissed case. Decision upheld by Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Later state class action also dismissed.

Past Employment

- Steptoe & Johnson, Washington, D.C.

Honors & Awards

- Rated AV[®] Preeminent by [Martindale-Hubbell[®]](#)
- Named [Best Lawyers[®]](#) 2014, 2018, and 2024 Environmental Law “Lawyer of the Year” in Omaha and 2024 Litigation – Environmental “Lawyer of the Year” in Omaha
- Included in [The Best Lawyers in America[®]](#) in the fields of Environmental Law (since 1997) and Litigation – Environmental (since 2011) (peer

Education

J.D., *cum laude*, Georgetown University, 1982

B.A., *magna cum laude*, Creighton University, 1979

Clerkships

Law Clerk to the Honorable Richard E. Robinson, Senior Judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska, 1982-1984



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nominations)

- Selected to the 2007-2010 & 2013-2023 Great Plains Super Lawyers® list
- Fellow – The American College of Environmental Lawyers
- Fellow – International Society of Barristers; Board of Governors (2012-2018)

Professional Associations

- American Bar Association – Section on Energy, Environment and Resources
- Nebraska State Bar Association – Chair (2022-2023) – Natural Resources and Environmental Law Section
- District of Columbia Bar Association
- Omaha Bar Association – Past President (2004-2005); Editor – *Omaha Bar Association Newsletter*
- Fellow – Nebraska State Bar Foundation
- Member – Leadership Omaha
- Air and Waste Management Association
- Institute of Internal Auditors, Environmental, Health & Safety
- Nebraska Disciplinary Review Board (2002-2009); Chairman (2007-2008)
- President – Nebraska Lawyers Trust Account Foundation (1994-1995)

Community Involvement

- General Counsel & Executive Committee Member – Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce (2019-present)
- Advisory Committee – OneWorld Community Health Centers (2008-present); Executive Committee (1998-2004)
- Board of Directors – Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum (2015-2021)
- Board of Directors – Omaha Public Library Foundation (2009-2015); President (2013)
- Board of Directors – Opera Omaha, Inc. (2009-2016); President (2013 –



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2015)

- Board of Advisors – St. Augustine Indian Mission (2005-2011); President (2008-2009)
- Board of Trustees – Duchesne Academy (1999-2005)
- President – Kiwanis Club of Omaha (1994-1995)
- President – St. Margaret Mary’s Parish Council (1993)

Presentations & Publications

- Moderator, “CEO Panel.” Nebraska Wind and Solar Conference
- “Environmental Exposures in Construction Operations.” Associated General Contractors 2002 Fall Meeting, October 2002
- “Environmental Citizens Suits: A Defense Perspective.” Nebraska Safety Council: Nebraska Safety, Health & Environmental Conference & Exposition, April 2003