



Rick Williams

Partner and National Business Leader, Environmental, Municipal, Expropriation & Regulatory

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Rick represents and advises clients on commercial and regulatory aspects of project development, permitting and operations in the energy and natural resource sectors, including land, environmental and Indigenous issues. Rick also represents and advises clients on dispute resolution including regulatory proceedings, corporate/commercial litigation and arbitration, with a focus on energy, transportation, forestry and mining.

Rick is the National Business Leader of the Environmental, Municipal, Expropriation and Regulatory Group and a member of the [Environmental, Social & Governance \(ESG\)](#) leadership team.

Rick has appeared at all levels of court in British Columbia, the Federal Court and the Supreme Court of Canada. He has represented clients before the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC), the Surface Rights Board, the Energy Resource Appeal Tribunal (formerly the Oil and Gas Appeal Tribunal), the Safety Authority, the Environmental Appeal Board as well as the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) and the National Energy Board (NEB). Rick also has significant experience advising clients on their applications and dealings with the British Columbia Energy Regulator (formerly Oil and Gas Commission).

Experience

- Acted for a developer organization in a hearing before the BCUC successfully opposing the approval of a Neighbourhood Energy Agreement and issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for a district energy project.
- Lead counsel on a number of appeals to the Energy Resource Appeal Tribunal (formerly the Oil and Gas Appeal Tribunal), including an oil and gas producer in the successful defence of a series of appeals – the first in British Columbia that directly addressed issues concerning the impact of hydraulic fracturing on groundwater and induced seismicity, and the sufficiency of regulations relating to such issues.
- Advised Pacific Northwest LNG on all regulatory aspects relating to its proposed LNG facility.
- Advised a project proponent on all regulatory matters relating to the PTP pipeline and KM LNG facility.
- Represented a ski resort in a dispute with a mining company regarding regulatory approvals for a power line project to provide service to a skiing lodge and issues regarding historical power service.
- Acting for the province of British Columbia in defence of an action by Blueberry River First Nations alleged breach of Treaty.
- Lead counsel in the first common carrier/common processor hearing before the BCUC in more than 30 years. This hearing established the test to be applied in BC.
- Lead counsel in the successful challenge of a public utility's discriminatory security deposit policy before the BCUC.
- Acted on successful applications to the ERCB (now AER), obtaining one of the largest interim shut-ins ever.
- Lead counsel on number of appeals to the Oil and Gas Appeal Tribunal.
- Lead counsel on many successful arbitrations/motions before the BC Surface Rights Board.
- Counsel on a number of contaminated site cases, including the first trial in BC to consider reasonably incurred costs of remediation under BC's legislation.
- Represented the British Columbia Ministry of Forests on a 20-day trial, resulting in its acquittal of all charges under the federal *Fisheries Act*.
- Lead counsel for a foreign bank in the arrest and judicial sale of a vessel, including overseeing a courthouse auction (part of global efforts to enforce a \$77-million judgment from a U.S. court).
- Successfully defended an international shipping company on the validity of an arrest to the Supreme Court of Canada. Acted for an international shipping company in successfully defending the validity of an arrest to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Insights & Events

- Author, "Canada concludes PFAS "forever chemicals" are toxic: What you need to know", BLG Article, March 2025
- Author, "Regulation of renewable energy projects in B.C.: Streamlined approval processes for project development", BLG Article, February 2025
- Author, "Canada's mandatory PFAS reporting deadline: Be cautious relying on prior compliance", BLG Article, January 2025
- Author, "New proposed guidelines regarding environmental claims - Canada's Competition Bureau holds a public consultation", BLG Article, January 2025
- Presenter, "Rise of the Environmental Class Action," BLG Environmental Seminar, Vancouver, November 20, 2024
- Presenter, "Environmental Class Actions: Climate Change, Floods, Wildfires, and Greenwashing - New Frontiers?," Western Canada Class Actions Conference, CLEBC, November 19, 2024

- Author, "Canada's proposals for implementing a modernized CEPA", BLG Article, November 2024
- Author, "Mandatory PFAS reporting in Canada: What manufacturers, importers and users need to know", BLG Article, August 2024
- Author, "ESG litigation and regulatory risks: Managing claims and liabilities for Canadian businesses", BLG Article, July 2024
- Presenter, "Environmental Law: Case Law Update," BEST Conference, BCEIA, May 9, 2024
- Author, "New draft VOC regulations in Canada: Same old constitutional battles? ", BLG Article, March 2024
- Author, "Hold the PFAS, please: Keeping forever chemicals out of the food chain in Canada", BLG Article, February 2024
- The future of Canadian energy: A review of 2023's top energy issues and what to expect in 2024, BLG Perspective, January 2024
- Presenter, "Regulation of Toxic Substances: Forever Chemicals (PFAS) – A Persistent and Growing Concern," CBA Environmental Law South (Alberta), 2023
- Author, "BC Supreme Court issues rare damages award for misfeasance in public office", BLG Article, October 2023
- Author, "Climate related disasters, claims and human rights", BLG Article, October 2023
- Thought Starters, BLG Perspective, September 2023
- Author, "Forever Chemicals (PFAS) regulations in Canada: What Canadian businesses need to know", BLG Article, September 2023
- Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Trends: Why it's important and what you need to know, BLG Perspective, June 2023
- Author, " Canada enacts into law the right to a healthy environment and more stringent chemical management requirements ", BLG Article, June 2023
- Author, "Kitselas First Nation and British Columbia reach Environmental Assessment Agreement", BLG Article, June 2023
- Author, "BC Supreme Court's Nuchatlaht land claim decision gives guidance on Aboriginal title litigation", BLG Article, June 2023
- Co-Presenter, "Environmental Law: Case Law Update," BEST Conference, May 2023.
- Co-Author, "[The “Forever Chemicals”: Dark Waters in Canada?](#)," BarTalk, April 2023
- Author, "Opening the tap: the B.C. government proposes new Watershed Security Strategy", BLG Article, March 2023

Beyond our Walls

Professional Involvement

- Director, British Columbia Environmental Industry Association
- Business Council of British Columbia Environmental Policy Advisory Committee
- Business Council of British Columbia Climate & Energy Policy Advisory Committee
- Canadian Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Member, Air & Waste Management Association
- Past Vice-President Communications, Environmental Managers Association of British Columbia

Awards & Recognitions

- Recognized in the 2025 edition of *Chambers Canada*.
- Named by *Best Lawyers®* as:
 - 2025 'Lawyer of the Year' for Oil & Gas Law;
 - 2023 'Lawyer of the Year' for Natural Resources Law;
 - 2022 'Lawyer of the Year' for Environmental Law; and
 - 2020 'Lawyer of the Year' for Oil and Gas Law.
 - Also recognized (since 2015) in *The Best Lawyers in Canada™* in the areas of Aboriginal Law/Indigenous Practice; Natural Resources Law; Energy Regulatory Law; Environmental Law; and Oil and Gas Law.
- Recognized in the 2024 edition of *Lexpert Special Edition: Energy and Mining*.
- Awarded the *Martindale-Hubbell®* designation of AV® *Preeminent™* for the 'highest peer rated level of professional excellence'
- Recognized by *Chambers Global* (since 2019) and *Chambers Canada* (2022) in Environmental Law
- Recognized by *The Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory* (since 2014) in Energy: Oil and Gas; Environmental Law; Energy (Electricity) and Aboriginal Law.
- Recognized in the 2024 edition of *The Legal 500 (Environment)*.
- Recognized by *Lexpert®/Report on Business Special Edition* in:
 - Canada leading Energy Lawyers (since 2014); and
 - Canada's Leading Corporate Lawyers (2019).
- Recognized by *Benchmark Canada* (since 2017) in the *Definitive Guide to Canada's Leading Litigation Firms & Attorneys* as a "Litigation Star" in the areas of Energy, Environment, Arbitration, and Commercial.

Bar Admission & Education

- British Columbia, 2000
- LLB, University of Victoria, 1999
- BA, University of Ottawa, 1995

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As the largest, truly full-service Canadian law firm, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG) delivers practical legal advice for domestic and international clients across more practices and industries than any Canadian firm. With over 725 lawyers, intellectual property agents and other professionals, BLG serves the legal needs of businesses and institutions across Canada and beyond – from M&A and capital markets, to disputes, financing, and trademark & patent registration.

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